

FORS CLAVIGERA

VOL. III

FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTERS

*TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS
OF GREAT BRITAIN*

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, D C L., LL D.

SECOND SMALL EDITION

VOL. III.

CONTAINING LETTERS XLIX-LXXII



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FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTER XLIX

FROM THE PROPHET EVEN UNTO THE PRIESTS

I WONDER if Fors will let me say any small proportion, this year, of what I intend. I wish she would, for my readers have every right to be doubtful of my plan till they see it more defined; and yet to define it severely would be to falsify it, for all that is best in it depends on my adopting whatever good I can find, in men and things, that will work to my purpose; which of course means action in myriads of ways that I neither wish to define, nor attempt to anticipate. Nay, I am wrong, even in speaking of it as a plan or scheme at all. It is only a method of uniting the force of all good plans and wise schemes: it is a principle and tendency, like the law of form in a crystal; not a plan. If I live, as I said at first, I will endeavour to show some small part of it in action; but it would be a poor design indeed, for the bettering of the world, which any man could see either quite round the outside, or quite into the inside of.

But I hope in the letters of this next year to spend less time in argument or attack; what I wish the reader to know, of principle, is already enough proved, if only he take the pains to read the preceding letters thoroughly; and I shall now, as far as Fors will let me, carry out my purpose of choosing and annotating passages of confirmatory classical literature; and answering, as they occur, the questions of my earnest correspondents, as to what each of them, in their place of life, may immediately do with advantage for St. George's help.

If those of my readers who have been under the impression that I wanted them to join me in establishing some model institution or colony, will look to the third page of Letter I., they will see that, so far from intending or undertaking any such thing, I meant to put my whole strength into my Oxford teaching; and, for my own part, to get rid of begging letters and live in peace.

Of course, when I have given fourteen thousand pounds away in a year,* everybody who wants some money thinks I have plenty for *them*. But my having given fourteen thousand pounds is just the reason I have *not* plenty for them; and, moreover, have no time to attend to them, (and generally, henceforward, my friends will please to note that

* Seven thousand to St. George's Company; five, for (ment of Mastership in Drawing in the Oxford schools; ^{to} more, in the series of drawings placed in those schools ^{to} their efficiency.

I have spent my life in helping other people, and am quite tired of it; and if they can now help me in my work, or praise me for it, I shall be much obliged to them; but I can't help them at theirs).

But this impression of my wanting to found a colony was founded on Letter V., and Letter VIII. (Vol. I. of this edition, pp. 101, 102, 157.) Read them over again now, altogether.

If the help I plead for come, we will indeed try to make some small piece of English ground beautiful; and if sufficient help come, many such pieces of ground; and on those we will put cottage dwellings, and educate the labourers' children in a certain manner. But that is not founding a colony. It is only agreeing to work on a given system. Any English gentleman who chooses to forbid the use of steam machinery—be it but over a few acres,—and to make the best of them he can by human labour, or who will secure a piece of his mountain ground from dog, gun, and excursion party, and let the wild flowers and wild birds live there in peace;—any English gentleman, I say, who will so command either of these things, is doing the utmost I would ask of him;—if, seeing the result of doing so much, he felt inclined to do more, field may add itself to field, cottage rise cottage,—here and there the sky begin to again above us, and the rivers to run pure. In a very little while, also, the general interest in education will assuredly discover that healthy

habits, and not mechanical drawing nor church catechism, are the staple of it; and then, not in my model colony only, but as best it can be managed in any unmodelled place or way—girls will be taught to cook, boys to plough, and both to behave; and that with the heart, which is the first piece of all the body that has to be instructed.

A village clergyman, (an excellent farmer, and very kind friend of my earliest college days,) sent me last January a slip out of the *Daily Telegraph*, written across in his own hand with the words "Advantage of Education." The slip described the eloquence and dexterity in falsehood of the Parisian Communist prisoners on their trial for the murder of the hostages. But I would fain ask my old friend to tell me himself whether he thinks instruction in the art of false eloquence should indeed receive from any minister of Christ the title of 'education' at all; and how far display of eloquence, instead of instruction in behaviour, has become the function, too commonly, of these ministers themselves.

I was asked by one of my Oxford pupils the other day why I had never said any serious word of what it might seem best for clergymen to do in a time of so great doubt and division.

I have not, because any man's becoming a clergyman in these days must imply one of two things—either that he has something to do and say for men which he honestly believes himself impelled to do and say by the Holy Ghost,—and in that case he

is likely to see his way without being shown it,—or else he is one of the group of so-called Christians who, except with the outward ear, “have not so much as heard whether there *be* any Holy Ghost,” and are practically lying, both to men and to God;—persons to whom, whether they be foolish or wicked in their ignorance, no honest way can possibly be shown.

The particular kinds of folly also which lead youths to become clergymen, uncalled, are especially intractable. That a lad just out of his teens, and not under the influence of any deep religious enthusiasm, should ever contemplate the possibility of his being set up in the middle of a mixed company of men and women of the world, to instruct the aged, encourage the valiant, support the weak, reprove the guilty, and set an example to all;—and not feel what a ridiculous and blasphemous business it would be, if he only pretended to do it for hire; and what a ghastly and murderous business it would be, if he did it strenuously wrong; and what a marvellous and all but incredible thing the Church and its power must be, if it were possible for him, with all the good meaning in the world, to do it rightly;—that any youth, I say, should ever have got himself into the state of recklessness, or conceit, required to become a clergyman at all, under these existing circumstances, must put him quite out of the pale of those whom one ~~appeals~~ ^{appeals} to on any reasonable or moral question, in serious writing. I went into a ritualistic church,

the other day, for instance, in the West End. It was built of bad Gothic, lighted with bad painted glass, and had its Litany intoned, and its sermon delivered—on the subject of wheat and chaff—by a young man of, as far as I could judge, very sincere religious sentiments, but very certainly the kind of person whom one might have brayed in a mortar among the very best of the wheat with a pestle, without making his foolishness depart from him. And, in general, any man's becoming a clergyman in these days implies that, at best, his sentiment has overpowered his intellect; and that, whatever the feebleness of the latter, the victory of his impertinent piety has been probably owing to its alliance with his conceit, and its promise to him of the gratification of being regarded as an oracle, without the trouble of becoming wise, or the grief of being so.

It is not, however, by men of this stamp that the principal mischief is done to the Church of Christ. Their foolish congregations are not enough in earnest even to be misled; and the increasing London or Liverpool respectable suburb is simply provided with its baker's and butcher's shop, its alehouse, its itinerant organ-grinders for the week, and stationary organ-grinder for Sunday, himself his monkey, in obedience to the commonest condition of demand and supply, and without much more danger in their Sunday's entertainment than in their Saturday's. But the importunate and zealous ministrations of the men who have been

strong enough to deceive themselves before they deceive others;—who give the grace and glow of vital sincerity to falsehood, and lie for God from the ground of their heart, produce forms of moral corruption in their congregations as much more deadly than the consequences of recognizedly vicious conduct, as the hectic of consumption is more deadly than the flush of temporary fever. And it is entirely unperceived by the members of existing churches that the words, “speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron,” do not in the least apply to wilful and self-conscious hypocrites, but only to those who do not recognize themselves for such. Of wilful assumption of the appearance of piety, for promotion of their own interests, few, even of the basest men, are frankly capable: and to the average English gentleman, deliberate hypocrisy is impossible. And, therefore, all the fierce invectives of Christ, and of the prophets and apostles, against hypocrisy, thunder above their heads unregarded; while all the while Annas and Caiaphas are sitting in Moses’ seat for ever; and the anger of God is accomplished against the daughter of His people, “for the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests, that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her. They have wandered blind in the streets; they have polluted themselves with blood, so that men could not touch their garments.” *

* Lamentations v. 13.

Take, for example, the conduct of the heads of the existing Church respecting the two powers attributed to them in this very verse. There is certainly no Bishop now in the Church of England who would either dare in a full drawing-room to attribute to himself the gift of prophecy, in so many words; or to write at the head of any of his sermons, "On such and such a day, of such and such a month, in such and such a place, the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying." Nevertheless, he claims to have received the Holy Ghost himself by laying on of hands; and to be able to communicate the Holy Ghost to other men in the same manner. And he knows that the office of the prophet is as simply recognized in the enumeration of the powers of the ancient Church, as that of the apostle, or evangelist, or doctor. And yet he can neither point out in the Church the true prophets, to whose number he dares not say he himself belongs, nor the false prophets, who are *casting out devils in the name of Christ*, without being known by Him;—and he contentedly suffers his flock to remain under the impression that the Christ who led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, left the gift of prophecy out of the group, as one needed no longer.

But the second word, 'priest,' is one which he finds it convenient to assume himself, and to give to his fellow-clergymen. He knows, just as well as he knows prophecy to be a gift attributed to the Christian minister, that priesthood is a function

expressly taken away from the Christian minister.* He dares not say in the open drawing-room that he offers sacrifice for any soul there;—and he knows that he cannot give authority for calling himself a priest from any canonical book of the New Testament. So he equivocates on the sound of the word ‘presbyter,’ and apologizes to his conscience and his flock by declaring, “The priest I say,—the presbyter I mean,” without even requiring so much poor respect for his quibble as would be implied by insistence that a so-called priest should at least *be* an Elder. And securing, as far as he can, the reverence of his flock, while he secretly abjures the responsibility of the office he takes the title of, again he lets the rebuke of his God fall upon a deafened ear, and reads that “from the Prophet unto the Priest, every one dealeth falsely,” without the slightest sensation that his own character is so much as alluded to.

Thus, not daring to call themselves prophets, which they know they ought to be; but daring, under the shelter of equivocation, to call themselves priests, which they know they are not, and are forbidden to be; thus admittedly, without power of prophecy, and only in stammering pretence to

* As distinguished, that is to say, from other members of the Church. All are priests, as all are kings; but the kingly function exists apart; the priestly, not so. The subject is examined at some length, and with a clearness which I cannot mend, in my old pamphlet on the ‘Construction of Sheepfolds,’ reprinted in “On the Old Road,” Vol. II. See also Letter XIII., in *Time and Tide*.

priesthood, they yet claim the power to forgive and retain sins. Whereupon, it is to be strictly asked of them, whose sins they remit; and whose sins they retain. For truly, if they have a right to claim any authority or function whatever—this is it. Prophecy, they cannot;—sacrifice, they cannot;—in their hearts there is no vision—in their hands no victim. The work of the Evangelist was done before they could be made Bishops; that of the Apostle cannot be done on a Bishop's throne: there remains to them, of all possible office of organization in the Church, only that of the pastor,—verily and intensely their own; received by them in definite charge when they received what they call the Holy Ghost;—"Be to the flock of Christ, a shepherd, not a wolf;—feed them, devour them not."

Does any man, of all the men who have received this charge in England, know what it *is* to be a wolf?—recognize in himself the wolfish instinct, and the thirst for the blood of God's flock? For if he does not know what is the nature of a wolf, how should he know what it is to be a shepherd? If he never felt like a wolf himself, does he know the people who do? He does not expect them to lick their lips and bare their teeth at him, I suppose, as they do in a pantomime? Did he ever in his life see a wolf coming, and debate with himself whether he should fight or fly?—or is not rather his whole life one headlong hireling's flight, without so much as turning his head to see what manner of beasts they are that follow?—nay, are not his

very hireling's wages paid him *for* flying instead of fighting?

Dares any one of them answer me—here from my college of the Body of Christ I challenge every mitre of them: definitely, the Lord of St. Peter's borough, whom I note as a pugnacious and accurately worded person, and hear of as an outspoken one, able and ready to answer for his fulfilment of the charge to Peter: How many wolves does he know in Peterborough—how many sheep?—what battle has he done—what bites can he show the scars of?—whose sins has he remitted in Peterborough—whose retained?—has he not remitted, like his brother Bishops, all the sins of the rich, and retained all those of the poor?—does he know, in Peterborough, who are fornicators, who thieves, who liars, who murderers?—and has he ever dared to tell any one of them to his face that he was so—if the man had over a hundred a year?

“Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to Thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites.” Who *are* the true Israelites, my lord of Peterborough, whom you can definitely announce for such, in your diocese? Or, perhaps, the Bishop of Manchester will take up the challenge, having lately spoken wisely—in generalities—concerning Fraud. Who are the true Israelites, my lord of Manchester, on your Exchange? Do they stretch their cloth, like other people?—

have they any underhand dealings with the liable-to-be-damned false Israelites—Rothschilds and the like? or are they duly solicitous about those wanderers' souls? and how often, on the average, do your Manchester clergy preach from the delicious parable, savouriest of all Scripture to rogues, at least since the eleventh century, ~~when~~ I find it to have been specially headed with ~~golden~~ title in my best Greek MS., "of the Pharisee and Publican"—and how often, on the average, from those objectionable First and Fifteenth Psalms?

For the last character in St. Paul's enumeration, which Bishops can claim, and the first which they are bound to claim, for the perfecting of the saints, and the work of the ministry, is that of the Doctor or Teacher.

In which character, to what work of their own, frank and faithful, can they appeal in the last fifty years of especial danger to the Church from false teaching? On this matter, my challenge will be most fittingly made to my own Bishop, of the University of Oxford. He inhibited, on the second Sunday of Advent of last year, another Bishop of the English Church from preaching at Carfax. By what right? Which of the two Bishops am I, their innocent lamb, to listen to? It is true that the insulted Bishop was only a colonial one;—am I to understand, therefore, that the Church sends her heretical Bishops out as Apostles, while she keeps her orthodox ones at home? and that, accordingly, a stay-at-home Bishop may always silence a returned

Apostle? And, touching the questions which are at issue, is there a single statement of the Bishop of Natal's, respecting the Bible text, which the Bishop of Oxford dares to contradict before Professor Max Muller, or any other leading scholar of Europe? Does the Bishop of Oxford himself believe every statement in the Bible? If not,—which does he disbelieve, *and why?* He suffers the whole collection of books to be spoken of—certainly by many clergymen in his diocese—as the Word of God. If he disbelieves any portion of it, that portion he is bound at once to inhibit them from so calling, till inquiry has been made concerning it; but if he *and* the other orthodox home-Bishops,—who would very joyfully, I perceive, burn the Bishop of Natal at Paul's, and make Ludgate Hill safer for the omnibuses with the cinders of him,—if they verily believe all, or even, with a living faith, *any*, vital part of the Bible, how is it that we, the incredulous sheep, see no signs following them that believe;—that though they can communicate the Holy Spirit, they cannot excommunicate the unholy one, and apologetically leave the healing of sick to the physician, the taking up of serpents to the juggler, and the moving of mountains to the railway-navvy?

“It was *never* meant that any one should do such things literally, after St. Paul's time.”

Then what *was* meant, and what *is*, doctors mine.?

Challenge enough, for this time, it seems to me; the rather that just as I finish writing it, I receive a challenge myself, requiring attentive answer.

Fors could not have brought it me at better time ; and my answer may both meet the doubts of many readers who would not so frankly have expressed them ; and contain some definitions of principle which are necessary for our future work.

My correspondent, referring to my complaint that no matron nor maid of England had yet joined the St. George's Company, answers, for her own part, first that her husband and family prevent her from doing it ; secondly, that she has done it already ; thirdly, that she will do it when I do it myself. It is only to the third of these pleas that I at present reply.

She tells me, first, that I have not joined the St. George's Company because I have no home. It is too true. But that is because my father, and mother, and nurse, are dead ; because the woman I hoped would have been my wife is dying ; and because the place where I would fain have stayed to remember all of them, was rendered physically uninhabitable to me by the violence of my neighbours ;—that is to say, by their destroying the fields I needed to think in, and the light I needed to work by. Nevertheless, I have, under these conditions, done the best thing possible to me—bought a piece of land on which I could live in peace ; and on that land, wild when I bought it, have already made, not only one garden, but two, to match against my correspondent's ; nor that without help from children who, though not mine, have been cared for as if they were.

Secondly ; my correspondent tells me* that my duty is to stay at home, instead of dating from places which are a dream of delight to *her*, and which, therefore, she concludes, must be a reality of delight to me.

She will know better after reading this extract from my last year's diary ; (worth copying, at any rate, for other persons interested in republican Italy). "Florence, 20th September, 1874.—Tour virtually ended for this year. I leave Florence to-day, thankfully, it being now a place of torment day and night for all loving, decent, or industrious people ; for every face one meets is full of hatred and cruelty ; and the corner of every house is foul ; and no thoughts can be thought in it, peacefully, in street, or cloister, or house, any more. And the last verses I read, of my morning's readings, are Esdras II., xv. 16, 17 : 'For there shall be sedition among men, and invading one another ; they shall not regard their kings nor princes, *and the course of their actions shall stand in their power*. A man shall desire to go into a city, and shall not be able.'"

What is said here of Florence is now equally true of every great city of France or Italy ; and my correspondent will be perhaps contented with me when she knows that only last Sunday I was debating with a very dear friend whether I might now be justified in indulging my indolence and cowardice by staying at home among my plants and minerals, and forsaking the study of Italian art for ever. My friend would fain have it so ; and my

correspondent shall tell me her opinion, after she knows—and I will see that she has an opportunity of knowing—what work I have done in Florence, and propose to do, if I can be brave enough.

Thirdly; my correspondent doubts the sincerity of my abuse of railroads because she suspects I use them. I do so constantly, my dear lady; few men more. I use everything that comes within reach of me. If the devil were standing at my side at this moment, I should endeavour to make some use of him as a local black. The wisdom of life is in preventing all the evil we can; and using what is inevitable, to the best purpose. I use my sicknesses, for the work I despise in health; my enemies, for study of the philosophy of benediction and malediction; and railroads, for whatever I find of help in them—looking always hopefully forward to the day when their embankments will be ploughed down again, like the camps of Rome, into our English fields. But I am perfectly ready even to construct a railroad, when I think one necessary; and in the opening chapter of 'Munera Pulveris' my correspondent will find many proper uses for steam-machinery specified. What is required of the members of St. George's Company is, not that they should never travel by railroads, nor that they should abjure machinery; but that they should never travel unnecessarily, or in wanton haste, and that they should never do with a machine what can be done with hands and arms, while hands and arms are idle.

Lastly, my correspondent feels it unjust to be required to make clothes, while she is occupied in the rearing of those who will require them.

Admitting (though the admission is one for which I do not say that I am prepared) that it is the patriotic duty of every married couple to have as large a family as possible, it is not from the happy Penelopes of such households that I ask—or should think of asking—the labour of the loom. I simply require that when women belong to the St. George's Company they should do a certain portion of useful work with their hands, if otherwise their said fair hands would be idle; and if on those terms I find sufficient clothing cannot be produced, I will use factories for them,—only moved by water, not steam.

My answer, as thus given, is, it seems to me, sufficient; and I can farther add to its force by assuring my correspondent that I shall never ask any member of St. George's Company to do more, in relation to his fortune and condition, than I have already done myself. Nevertheless, it will be found by any reader who will take the trouble of reference, that in recent letters I have again and again intimated the probable necessity, before the movement could be fairly set on foot, of more energetic action and example, towards which both my thoughts and circumstances seem gradually leading me; and, in that case, I shall trustfully look to the friends who accuse me of cowardice in doing too little, for defence against the, I believe, too

probable imputations impending from others, of folly in doing too much.

It chanced, I see, while I print my challenge to the Bishop of my University, that its neighbouring clergymen are busy in expressing to him their thanks and compliments. The following address is worth preserving. I take it from the *Morning Post* of December 16, and beneath it have placed an article from the *Telegraph* of the following day, describing the results of clerical and episcopal teaching of an orthodox nature in Liverpool, as distinguished from 'Doctor' Colenso's teaching in Africa.

"THE INHIBITION OF BISHOP COLENZO.—The clergy of the rural deanery of Witney, Oxford, numbering thirty-four, together with the rural dean (the Rev. F. M. Cunningham), have subscribed their names to the following circular, which has been forwarded to the Bishop of Oxford:—'To the Right Rev. Father in God, John Fielder, by Divine permission Lord Bishop of Oxford.—We, the undersigned clergy of the rural deanery of Witney, in your Lordship's diocese, beg respectfully to offer to your Lordship our cordial sympathy under the painful circumstances in which you have been placed by the invitation to the Right Rev. Dr. Colenso to preach in one of the churches in your diocese. Your firm and spontaneous refusal to permit Dr. Colenso to preach will be thankfully accepted by all consistent members of our Church as a protest much needed in these times against the teaching of one who has grievously offended many consciences, and has attempted as far as in him lay to injure the 'faith which was delivered to the saints.' That your Lordship may long be spared.

to defend the truth, is the prayer of your Lordship's obedient and attached clergy."

[The article from the *Telegraph*, omitted in this edition, describes at length recent crimes of violence, and concludes :—] "The foulest among the beasts which perish is clean, the most ferocious gentle, matched with these Lancashire pitmen, who make sport of the shame and slaying of a woman, and blaspheme nature in their deeds, without even any plea whatever to excuse their cruelty."

The clergy may vainly exclaim against being made responsible for this state of things. They, and chiefly their Bishops, are wholly responsible for it; nay, are efficiently the causes of it, preaching a false gospel for hire. But, putting all questions of false or true gospels aside, suppose that they only obeyed St. Paul's plain order in 1st Corinthians v. 11. Let them determine as distinctly what covetousness and extortion are in the rich, as what drunkenness is, in the poor. Let them refuse, themselves, and order their clergy to refuse, to go out to dine with such persons; and still more positively to allow such persons to sup at God's table. And they would soon know what fighting wolves meant, and something more of their own pastoral duty than they learned in that Consecration Service, where they proceeded to follow the example of the Apostles in Prayer, but carefully left out the Fasting.

LETTER L

AGNES' BOOK

A FRIEND, in whose judgment I greatly trust, remonstrated sorrowfully with me, the other day, on the desultory character of Fors; and pleaded with me for the writing of an arranged book instead.

But he might as well plead with a birch-tree growing out of a crag, to arrange its boughs beforehand. The winds and floods will arrange them according to their wild liking; all that the tree has to do, or can do, is to grow gaily, if it may be; sadly, if gaiety be impossible; and let the black jags and scars rend the rose-white of its trunk where Fors shall choose.

But I can well conceive how irritating it must be to any one chancing to take special interest in any one part of my subject—the life of Scott for instance,—to find me, or lose me, wandering away from it for a year or two; and sending roots into new ground in every direction: or (for my friend taxed me with this graver error also) needlessly re-rooting myself in the old.

And, all the while, some kindly expectant people are waiting for 'details of my plan.' In the presentment of which, this main difficulty still lets me;

that, if I told them, or tried to help them definitely to conceive, the ultimate things I aim at, they would at once throw the book down as hopelessly Utopian; but if I tell them the immediate things I aim at, they will refuse to do those instantly possible things, because inconsistent with the present vile general system. For instance—I take (see Letter V) Wordsworth's single line,

“We live by admiration, hope, and love,”

for my literal guide, in all education. My final object, with every child born on St. George's estate, will be to teach it what to admire, what to hope for, and what to love: but how far do you suppose the steps necessary to such an ultimate aim are immediately consistent with what Messrs. Huxley and Co. call ‘Secular education’? Or with what either the Bishop of Oxford, or Mr. Spurgeon, would call ‘Religious education’?

What to admire, or wonder at! Do you expect a child to wonder at—being taught that two and two make four—(though if only its masters had the sense to teach *that*, honestly, it would be something)—or at the number of copies of nasty novels and false news a steam-engine can print for its reading?

What to hope? Yes, my secular friends—What? That it shall be the richest shopman in the street; and be buried with black feathers enough over its coffin?

What to love—Yes, my ecclesiastical friends,

and who is its neighbour, think you? Will you meet these three demands of mine with your three R's, or your catechism?

And how would I meet them myself? Simply by never, so far as I could help it, letting a child read what is not worth reading, or see what is not worth seeing; and by making it live a life which, whether it will or no, shall enforce honourable hope of continuing long in the land—whether of men or God.

And who is to say what is worth reading, or worth seeing? sneer the Republican mob. Yes, gentlemen, you who never knew a good thing from a bad, in all your lives, may well ask that!

Let us try, however, in such a simple thing as a child's book. Yesterday, in the course of my walk, I went into a shepherd-farmer's cottage, to wish whoever might be in the house a happy new year. His wife was at home, of course; and his little daughter, Agnes, nine years old; both as good as gold, in their way.

The cottage is nearly a model of those which I shall expect the tenants of St. George's Company, and its active members, to live in;—the entire building, parlour, and kitchen, (in this case one, but not necessarily so,) bedrooms and all, about the size of an average dining-room in Grosvenor Place or Park Lane. The conversation naturally turning to Christmas doings and havings,—and I, as an author, of course inquiring whether Agnes had any new books, Agnes brought me her library

—consisting chiefly in a good pound's weight of the literature which cheap printing enables the pious to make Christmas presents of for a penny. A full pound, or it might be, a pound and a half, of this instruction, full of beautiful sentiments, woodcuts, and music. More woodcuts in the first two ounces of it I took up, than I ever had to study in the first twelve years of my life. Splendid woodcuts, too, in the best Kensington style, and rigidly on the principles of high, and commercially remunerative, art, taught by Messrs. Redgrave, Cole, and Company.

Somehow, none of these seem to have interested little Agnes, or been of the least good to her. Her pound and a half of the best of the modern pious and picturesque is (being of course originally boardless) now a crumpled and variously doubled-up heap, brought down in a handful, or lapful, rather; most of the former insides of the pamphlets being now the outsides; and every form of dog's ear, puppy's ear, cat's ear, kitten's ear, rat's ear, and mouse's ear, developed by the contortions of weary fingers at the corners of their didactic and evangelically sibylline leaves. I ask if I may borrow one to take home and read. Agnes is delighted; but undergoes no such pang of care as a like request would have inflicted on my boyish mind, and needed generous stifling of;—nay, had I asked to borrow the whole heap, I am not sure whether Agnes' first tacit sensation would not have been one of deliverance.

Being very fond of pretty little girls, (not, by any means, excluding pretty—tall ones,) I choose, for my own reading, a pamphlet* which has a picture of a beautiful little girl with long hair, lying very ill in bed, with her mother putting up her forefinger at her brother, who is crying, with a large tear on the side of his nose; and a legend beneath: ‘Harry told his mother the whole story.’ The pamphlet has been doubled up by Agnes right through the middle of the beautiful little girl’s face, and no less remorselessly through the very middle of the body of the ‘Duckling Astray,’ charmingly drawn by Mr. Harrison Weir on the opposite leaf. But my little Agnes knows so much more about real ducklings than the artist does, that her severity in this case is not to be wondered at.

I carry my Children’s Prize penny’s-worth home to Brantwood, full of curiosity to know “the whole story.” I find that this religious work is edited by a Master of Arts—no less—and that two more woodcuts of the most finished order are given to Harry’s story,—representing Harry and the pretty little girl, (I suppose so, at least; but, alas, now with her back turned to me,—the cuts came cheaper so,) dressed in the extreme of fashion, down to her boots,—first running with Harry, in snow, after a carriage, and then reclining against Harry’s shoulder in a snowstorm.

* The Children’s Prize. No. XII. December 1873. Price one penny.

I arrange my candles for small print, and proceed to read this richly illustrated story.

Harry and his sister were at school together, it appears, at Salisbury; and their father's carriage was sent, in a snowy day, to bring them home for the holidays. They are to be at home by five; and their mother has invited a children's party at seven. Harry is enjoined by his father, in the letter which conveys this information, to remain inside the carriage, and not to go on the box.

Harry is a good boy, and does as he is bid; but nothing whatever is said in the letter about not getting out of the carriage to walk up hills. And at 'two-mile hill' Harry thinks it will be clever to get out and walk up it, without calling to, or stopping, John on the box. Once out himself, he gets Mary out;—the children begin snowballing each other; the carriage leaves them so far behind that they can't catch it; a snowstorm comes on, etc., etc.; they are pathetically frozen within a breath of their lives; found by a benevolent carter, just in time; warmed by a benevolent farmer, the carter's friend; restored to their alarmed father and mother; and Mary has a rheumatic fever, "and for a whole week it was not known whether she would live or die," which is the Providential punishment of Harry's sin in getting out of the carriage.

Admitting the perfect appositeness and justice of this Providential punishment; I am, parenthetically, desirous to know of my Evangelical friends, first, whether from the corruption of Harry's nature

they could have expected anything better than his stealthily getting out of the carriage to walk up the hill?—and, secondly, whether the merits of Christ, which are enough to save any murderer or swindler from all the disagreeable consequences of murder and swindling, in the next world, are not enough in this world, if properly relied upon, to save a wicked little boy's sister from rheumatic fever? This, I say, I only ask parenthetically, for my own information; my immediate business being to ask what effect this story is intended to produce on my shepherd's little daughter Agnes?

Intended to produce, I say; what effect it *does* produce, I can easily ascertain; but what do the writer and the learned editor expect of it? Or rather, to touch the very beginning of the inquiry, for what class of child do they intend it? 'For all classes,' the enlightened editor and liberal publisher doubtless reply. 'Classes, indeed! In the glorious liberty of the Future, there shall be none!'

Well, be it so; but in the inglorious slavery of the Past, it has happened that my little Agnes's father has not kept a carriage; that Agnes herself has not often seen one, is not likely often to be in one, and has seen a great deal too much snow, and had a great deal too much walking in it, to be tempted out,—if she ever has the chance of being driven in a carriage to a children's party at seven,—to walk up a hill on the road. Such is our benighted life in Westmoreland. In the future, do

my pious and liberal friends suppose that all little Agneses are to drive in carriages? That is *their* Utopia. Mine, so much abused for its impossibility, is only that a good many little Agneses who at present drive in carriages, shall have none.

Nay, but perhaps, the learned editor did not intend the story for children 'quite in Agnes's position.' For what sort did he intend it, then? For the class of children whose fathers keep carriages, and whose mothers dress their girls by the Paris modes, at three years old? Very good; then, in families which keep carriages and footmen, the children are supposed to think a book is a prize, which costs a penny? Be that also so, in the Republican cheap world; but might not the cheapeners print, when they are about it, prize poetry for their penny? Here is the 'Christmas Carol,' set to music, accompanying this moral story of the Snow.

"Hark, hark, the merry pealing,
List to the Christmas chime,
Every breath and every feeling
Hails the good old time;
Brothers, sisters, homeward speed,
All is mirth and play;
Hark, hark, the merry pealing,—
Welcome Christmas Day.

Sing, sing, around we gather,
Each with something new,
Cheering mother, cheering father,
From the Bible true;

Bring the holly, spread the feast,
Every heart to cheer,
Sing, sing, a merry Christmas,
A happy, bright New Year."

Now, putting aside for the moment all questions touching the grounds of the conviction of the young people for whom these verses are intended of the truth of the Bible; or touching the propriety of their cheering their fathers and mothers by quotations from it; or touching the difficultly reconcilable merits of old times and new things; I call these verses bad, primarily, because they are not rhythmical. I consider good rhythm a moral quality. I consider the rhythm in these stanzas demoralized, and demoralizing. I quote, in opposition to them, one of the rhymes by which my own ear and mind were educated in early youth, as being more distinctly, and literally 'moral,' than that Christmas carol.

"Dame Wiggins of Lee
Was a worthy old soul,
As e'er threaded a needle,
Dle, or washed in a bowl.
She held mice and rats
In such antipathy,
That Seven good Cats
Kept Dame Wiggins of Lee."

Putting aside also, in our criticism of these verses, the very debateable question, whether Dame Wiggins kept the Seven Cats, or the Seven Cats Dame Wiggins; and giving no judgment as to the propriety of the license taken in pronunciation; by

the accent on the last syllable of 'antipathy,' or as to the evident plagiarism of the first couplet from the classical ballad of King Cole, I aver these rhymes to possess the primary virtue of rhyme,—that is to say, to be rhythmical, in a pleasant and exemplary degree. And I believe, and will venture also to assert my belief, that the matter contained in them, though of an imaginative character, is better food for a child's mind than either the subject or sentiment of the above quoted Christmas Carol.

The mind of little Agnes, at all events, receives from story, pictures, and carol, altogether, no very traceable impression; but, I am happy to say, certainly no harm. She lives fifteen miles from the nearest manufacturing district,—sees no vice, except perhaps sometimes in the village on Sunday afternoons; hears, from week's end to week's end, the sheep bleat, and the wind whistle,—but neither human blasphemy, nor human cruelty of command. Her shepherd father, out on the hills all day, is thankful at evening to return to his fireside, and to have his little daughter to look at, instead of a lamb. She suffers no more from schooling than serves to make her enjoy her home;—knows already the mysteries of butter-making and poultry-keeping;—curtsies to me without alarm when I pass her door, if she is outside of it;—and, on the whole, sees no enemy but winter and rough weather.

But what effect this modern Christmas carol *would* have had on her mind, if she had had the full advantage of modern education in an advanced and

prosperous town,—the following well written letter, —happily sent me by Fors at the necessary moment, —enables me at once to exhibit :—

“ 10th January, 1874.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—Your appendix to the Fors this month contains a chapter on what some will assert is very exceptional —shire brutality. After nine years’ residence in a —shire village, I am compelled to believe that the vileness which horrified Judge Mellor is everywhere ingrained where factory and colliery rule prevails.

“Could you but hear the blasphemous and filthy language our rosy village bairns use as soon as they are out of the parson’s earshot, even when leaving the Sabbath School !

“Yet we have a rural dean as incumbent, an excellent schoolmaster, and model school. The Government Inspector is highly satisfied, and there are the usual edifying tea-parties, prize-givings, and newspaper puffs, yearly.

“I know that the children are well taught six days a week, yet there is little fruit of good behaviour among them, and an indecency of speech which is amazing in rural children. On Christmas morn a party of these children, boys and girls, singing carols, encountered my young daughter going alone to the church service. The opportunity was tempting, and as if moved by one vile spirit, they screamed at her a blast of the most obscene and profane epithets that vicious malice could devise. She knew none of them ; had never harmed them in her life. She came home with her kind, tender heart all aghast. ‘Why do they hate me so?’ she asked.

“Yet a short time after the same children came into the

yard, and began, with the full shrill powers of their young lungs,

‘Why do I love Jesus?’

the refrain,

‘Because He died for me,’

with especial gusto. My husband, ignorant of their previous conduct, gave them a bright shilling, which evoked three more hymns of similar character. What does all this mean?

“Our Bishop says that we have a model parish, a model school, and a model parson—yet we have children like this. Our parson knows it, and says to me that he can do nothing to prevent it.

“More than this. It is almost incredible; but my own horrified ears have borne witness of it. Young boys will threaten girls of their own age, in the vilest terms, with outrage like that at Burnley. I have heard it again and again. Had Judge Mellor had nine years’ experience of —shire life, he would not have been surprised at the utter brutality of mind exhibited.

“Yet we are not criminal compared with other districts. Bastardy and drunkenness are at present the darkest shades we can show, but there is perhaps some better influence at work from the vicinage of two great squares, which secures us pure air and wide fields.

“I am glad to read that you purpose vexing yourself less with the sins of the times during the coming summer. It is too great a burthen for a human mind to bear the world’s sins in spirit, as you do. If you mean to preserve yourself for the many thousands whose inner heart’s bitterness your voice has relieved, you must vex yourself less about this age’s madness.

“The sure retribution is at hand already.” *

Yes, I know that; but am I to be cheerfuller therefor?

‘What does all this mean?’ my correspondent asks, in wise anxiety.

National prosperity, my dear Madam, according to Mr. Goschen, the *Times*, and *Morning Post*;—national prosperity carried to the point of not knowing what to do with our money. Enlightenment, and Freedom, and orthodox Religion, and Science of the superbest and trustworthiest character, and generally the Reign of Law, answer the Duke of Argyll and Professor Huxley. Ruin—inevitable and terrible, such as no nation has yet suffered,—answer God and the Fates.

Yes—inevitable. England has to drink a cup which cannot pass from her—at the hands of the Lord, the cup of His fury;—surely the dregs of it, the wicked of the earth shall wring them and drink them out.

For let none of my readers think me mad enough or wild enough to hope that any effort, or repentance, or change of conduct, could now save the country from the consequences of her follies, or the Church from the punishment of her crimes. This St. George’s Company of ours is mere raft-making amidst irrevocable wreck—the best we can do, to be done bravely and cheerfully, come of it what may.

Let me keep, therefore, to-day wholly to definite matters, and to little ones. What the education we now give our children leads to, my correspondent’s letter shows. What education they should have, instead, I may suggest perhaps in some particulars.

What should be done, for instance, in the way of gift-giving, or instruction-giving, for our little Agnes of the hill-side? Would the St. George's Company, if she were the tenant, only leave her alone,—teach her nothing?

Not so; very much otherwise than so. This is some part of what should be done for her, were she indeed under St. George's rule.

Instead of the "something new," which our learned Master of Arts edits for her in carolling, she should learn by heart words which her fathers had known, many and many a year ago. As, for instance, these two little carols of grace before meat:—

"What God gives, and what we take,
'Tis a gift for Christ His sake,
Be the meale of Beanes and Pease,
God be thanked for those and these.
Have we flesh, or have we fish,
All are Fragments from His dish.
He His Church save; and the King;
And our Peace here, like a Spring,
Make it ever flourishing"

"Here, a little child, I stand
Heaving up my either hand;
Cold as Paddocks though they be,
Here I lift them up to Thee,
For a Benizon to fall,
On our meat, and on us all."

These verses, or such as these, Agnes should be able to say, and sing; and if on any state occasion it were desired of her to say grace, should be so

mannered as to say obediently, without either vanity or shame. Also, she should know other rhymes for her own contentment such as she liked best, out of narrow store offered to her, if *she chose* to learn to read. Reading by no means being enforced upon her—still less, writing; nothing enforced on her but household help to her mother; instant obedience to her father's or mother's word; order and cleanliness in her own departments and person; and gentleness to all inoffensive creatures—paddocks as well as lambs and chickens.

Further, instead of eighteen distinct penny Children's Prizes, containing seventy-two elaborate woodcuts of 'Ducklings Astray,' and the like, (which I should especially object to, in the case of Agnes, as too personal, she herself being little more at present than a duckling astray,) the St. George's Company would invest for her at once, the 'ridiculously small sum of eighteenpence,' in one coloured print—coloured by hand, for the especial decoration of her own chamber. This colouring by hand is one of the occupations which young women of the upper classes, in St. George's Company, will undertake as a business of pure duty; it was once a very wholesome means of livelihood to poorer art students. The plates of Sibthorpe's *Flora Græca*, for instance, cost, I am informed, on their first publication, precisely the sum in question,—eighteenpence each,—for their colouring by hand:—the enterprising publisher who issued the more recent editions, reducing, in

conformity with modern views on the subject of economy, the colourist's remuneration to thirty shillings per hundred. But in the St. George's Company, young ladies who have the gift of colouring will be taught to colour engravings simply as well as they can do it, without any reference whatever to pecuniary compensation; and such practice I consider to be the very best possible elementary instruction for themselves, in the art of water-colour painting.

And the print which should be provided and thus coloured for little Agnes' room should be no less than the best engraving I could get made of Simon Memmi's St. Agnes in Paradise; of which—(according to the probable notions of many of my readers, absurd and idolatrous)—image, little Agnes should know the legend as soon as she was able to understand it; though, if the St. George's Company could manage it for her, she should be protected from too early instruction in the meaning of that legend, by such threats from her English playfellows as are noticed in my correspondent's letter.

Such should be some small part of her religious education. For beginning of secular education, the St. George's Company would provide for her, above and before all things, a yard or two square of St. George's ground, which should be wholly her own; together with instruments suited to her strength, for the culture, and seeds for the sowing, thereof. On which plot of ground, or near it, in a convenient place, there should be a beehive, out

of which it should be considered a crowning achievement of Agnes' secular virtues if she could produce, in its season, a piece of snowy and well-filled comb. And, (always if she chose to learn to read,) books should be given her containing such information respecting bees, and other living creatures, as it appeared to the St. George's Company desirable she should possess. But touching the character of this desirable information, what I have to say being somewhat lengthy, must be deferred to my March letter.

CASTLETON, PEAK OF DERBYSHIRE,
27th January.

. Since finishing this letter, I have driven leisurely through the midland manufacturing districts, which I have not traversed, except by rail, for the last ten years. The two most frightful things I have ever yet seen in my life are the south-eastern suburb of Bradford, (six miles long,) and the scene from Wakefield bridge, by the chapel; yet I cannot but more and more reverence the fierce courage and industry, the gloomy endurance, and the infinite mechanical ingenuity of the great centres, as one reverences the fervid labours of a wasp's nest, though the end of all is only a noxious lump of clay.

LETTER LI

HUMBLE BEES

HERNE HILL,

9th Feb., 1875.

I HAVE been so much angered, distressed, and defeated, by many things, during these last autumn and winter months, that I can only keep steadily to my business by insisting to myself on my own extreme value and importance to the world; and quoting, in self-application, the most flattering texts I can find, such as, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you," and so on; hoping that at least a little more of my foolishness is being pounded out of me at every blow; and that the dough I knead for Fors may be daily of purer wheat.

I wish I could raise it with less leaven of malice; but I dislike some things and some people so much, that, having been always an impetuous, inconsiderate, and weakly communicative person, I find it impossible to hold my tongue in this time of advanced years and petulance. I am thankful, to-day, to have one most pleasant thing first to refer to;—the notable speech, namely, of Mr. Johnson, the President of the Manchester Chamber

of Commerce, on the immorality of cheapness; the first living words respecting commerce which I have ever known to be spoken in England, in my time;—on which, nevertheless, I can in no wise dilate to-day, but most thankfully treasure them for study in a future letter; having already prepared for this one, during my course of self-applause taken medicinally, another passage or two of my own biography, putting some of the reasons for my carelessness about Agnes' proficiency in reading or writing, more definitely before the reader.

Until I was more than four years old, we lived in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, the greater part of the year; for a few weeks in the summer breathing country air by taking lodgings in small cottages (real cottages, not villas, so-called) either about Hampstead, or at Dulwich, at 'Mrs. Ridley's,' the last of a row in a lane which led out into the Dulwich fields on one side, and was itself full of buttercups in spring, and blackberries in autumn. But my chief remaining impressions of those days are attached to Hunter Street. My mother's general principles of first treatment were, to guard me with steady watchfulness from all avoidable pain or danger; and, for the rest, to let me amuse myself as I liked, provided I was neither fretful nor troublesome. But the law was, that I should find my own amusement. No toys of any kind were at first allowed;—and the pity of my Croydon aunt for my monastic poverty in this respect was boundless. On one of my birthdays, thinking to overcome my

mother's resolution by splendour of temptation, she bought the most radiant Punch and Judy she could find in all the Soho bazaar—as big as a real Punch and Judy, all dressed in scarlet and gold, and that would dance, tied to the leg of a chair. I must have been greatly impressed, for I remember well the look of the two figures, as my aunt herself exhibited their virtues. My mother was obliged to accept them; but afterwards quietly told me it was not right that I should have them; and I never saw them again.

Nor did I painfully wish, what I was never permitted for an instant to hope, or even imagine, the possession of such things as one saw in toy-shops. I had a bunch of keys to play with, as long as I was capable only of pleasure in what glittered and jingled; as I grew older, I had a cart, and a ball; and when I was five or six years old, two boxes of well-cut wooden bricks. With these modest, but, I still think, entirely sufficient possessions, and being always summarily whipped if I cried, did not do as I was bid, or tumbled on the stairs, I soon attained serene and secure methods of life and motion; and could pass my days contentedly in tracing the squares and comparing the colours of my carpet;—examining the knots in the wood of the floor, or counting the bricks in the opposite houses; with rapturous intervals of excitement during the filling of the water-cart, through its leathern pipe, from the dripping iron post at the pavement edge; or the still more admirable proceedings

of the turncock, when he turned and turned till a fountain sprang up in the middle of the street. But the carpet, and what patterns I could find in bed covers, dresses, or wall-papers to be examined, were my chief resources, and my attention to the particulars in these was soon so accurate, that when at three and a half I was taken to have my portrait painted by Mr. Northcote, I had not been ten minutes alone with him before I asked him why there were holes in his carpet. The portrait in question represents a very pretty child with yellow hair, dressed in a white frock like a girl, with a broad light-blue sash and blue shoes to match; the feet of the child wholesomely large in proportion to its body; and the shoes still more wholesomely large in proportion to the feet.

These articles of my daily dress were all sent to the old painter for perfect realization; but they appear in the picture more remarkable than they were in my nursery, because I am represented as running in a field at the edge of a wood with the trunks of its trees striped across in the manner of Sir Joshua Reynolds; while two rounded hills, as blue as my shoes, appear in the distance, which were put in by the painter at my own request; for I had already been once, if not twice, taken to Scotland; and my Scottish nurse having always sung to me as we approached the Tweed or Esk,—

“For Scotland, my darling, lies full in my view,
With her barefooted lassies, and mountains so blue,”

I had already generally connected the idea of distant hills with approach to the extreme felicities of life, in my (Scottish) aunt's garden of gooseberry bushes, sloping to the Tay.

But that, when old Mr. Northcote asked me (little thinking, I fancy, to get any answer so explicit) what I would like to have in the distance of my picture, I should have said "blue hills" instead of "gooseberry bushes," appears to me—and I think without any morbid tendency to think over-much of myself—a fact sufficiently curious, and not without promise, in a child of that age.

I think it should be related also that having, as aforesaid, been steadily whipped if I was troublesome, my formed habit of serenity was greatly pleasing to the old painter; for I sat contentedly motionless, counting the holes in his carpet, or watching him squeeze his paint out of its bladders,—a beautiful operation, indeed, it seemed to me; but I do not remember taking any interest in Mr. Northcote's applications of the pigments to the canvas; my ideas of delightful art, in that respect, involving indispensably the possession of a large pot, filled with paint of the brightest green, and of a brush which would come out of it soppy. But my quietude was so pleasing to the old man that he begged my father and mother to let me sit to him for the face of a child which he was painting in a classical subject; where I was accordingly represented as reclining on a leopard skin, and having a thorn taken out of my foot by a wild man of the woods.

In all these particulars, I think the treatment, or accidental conditions, of my childhood, entirely right, for a child of my temperament ; but the mode of my introduction to literature appears to me questionable, and I am not prepared to carry it out in St. George's schools without much modification. I absolutely declined to learn to read by syllables ; but would get an entire sentence by heart with great facility, and point with accuracy to every word in the page as I repeated it. As, however, when the words were once displaced, I had no more to say, my mother gave up, for the time, the endeavour to teach me to read, hoping only that I might consent, in process of years, to adopt the popular system of syllabic study. But I went on, to amuse myself, in my own way ; learnt whole words at a time, as I did patterns ;—and at five years old was sending for my 'second volumes' to the circulating library.

This effort to learn the words in their collective aspect, was assisted by my real admiration of the look of printed type, which I began to copy for my pleasure, as other children draw dogs and horses. The following inscription, facsimile'd from the fly leaf of my 'Seven Champions of Christendom,' I believe, (judging from the independent views taken in it of the character of the letter L, and the relative elevation of G,) to be an extremely early art study of this class ; and as, by the will of Fors, the first lines of the note written the other day underneath my copy of it, in direction to Mr. Burgess, presented

some notable points of correspondence with it, I thought it well he should engrave them together, as they stood.

The noble knight like a bold and daring hero
then entered the valley where the dra-
gon had his abode who no sooner had sight of him but
his war then throat sent forth a sound more

Bolton Abbey
Dear Bolton 24th Jan. 75
Will you kindly furnish
moderate care, the above
of ancient manuscript in Fol.

It would be difficult to give more distinct evidence than is furnished by these pieces of manuscript, of the incurably desultory character which has brought on me the curse of Reuben, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." But I reflect, hereupon, with resolute self-complacency, that water, when good, is a good thing, though it be not stable; and that it may be better sometimes to irrigate than excel. And of the advantage, in many respects, of learning to write and read, if at all, in the above pictorial manner, I have much to say on some other occasion; but, having to-day discoursed enough

about myself, will assume that Agnes, wholly at her own sweet will, has made shift to attain the skill and temper necessary for the use of any kind of good book, or bible. It is, then, for the St. George's Company to see that all the bibles she has, whether for delight or instruction, shall be indeed holy bibles; written by persons, that is to say, in whom the word of God dwelt, and who spoke or wrote according to the will of God; and, therefore, with faithful purpose of speaking the truth touching what they had to tell, or of singing, rhyming, or what not else, for the amusement whether of children or grown-up persons, in a natural, modest, and honest manner, doing their best for the love of God and men, or children, or of the natural world; and not for money, (though for the time necessary to learn the arts of singing or writing, such honest minstrels and authors, manifestly possessing talent for their business, should be allowed to claim daily moderate maintenance, and for their actual toil, in performance of their arts, modest reward, and daily bread).

And, passing by for the present the extremely difficult and debateable question, by what kind of entertaining and simple bibles Agnes shall be first encouraged in the pursuits of literature, I wish to describe to-day more particularly the kind of book I want to be able to give her about her bees, when she is old enough to take real charge of them. For I don't in the least want a book to tell her how many species of bees there are; nor what grounds there may be for suspecting that one species is

another species; nor why Mr. B—— is convinced that what Mr. A—— considered two species are indeed one species; nor how conclusively Mr. C—— has proved that what Mr. B—— described as a new species is an old species. Neither do I want a book to tell her what a bee's inside is like, nor whether it has its brains in the small of its back, or nowhere in particular, like a modern political economist; nor whether the morphological nature of the sternal portion of the thorax should induce us, strictly, to call it the prosternum, or may ultimately be found to present no serious inducement of that nature. But I want a book to tell her, for instance, how a bee buzzes; and how, and by what instrumental touch, its angry buzz differs from its pleased or simple busy buzz.* Nor have I any objection to the child's learning, for good and all, such a dreadful word as 'proboscis,' though I don't, myself, understand why in the case of a big animal, like an elephant, one should be allowed, in short English, to say that it takes a bun with its trunk;

* I am not sure, after all, that I should like her to know even so much as this. For on inquiring, myself, into the matter, I find (Ormerod, quoting Dr. H. Landois) that a humble bee has a drum in its stomach, and that one half of this drum can be loosened and then drawn tight again, and that the bee breathes through the slit between the loose half and tight half, and that in this slit there is a little comb, and on this comb the humble bee plays while it breathes, as on a Jew's harp, and can't help it. But a honey bee hums with its "thoracic spiracles," not with its stomach. On the whole—I don't think I shall tell Agnes anything about all this. She may get through her own life, perhaps, just as well without ever knowing that there's any such thing as a thorax, or a spiracle.

and yet be required to state always, with severe accuracy, that a bee gathers honey with its proboscis. Whatever we were allowed to call it, however, our bee-book must assuredly tell Agnes and me, what at present I believe neither of us know,—certainly I don't, myself, —how the bee's feeding instrument differs from its building one, and what either may be like.

I pause, here, to think over and put together the little I do know; and consider how it should be told Agnes. For to my own mind, it occurs in a somewhat grotesque series of imagery, with which I would not, if possible, infect hers. The difference, for instance, in the way of proboscis, between the eminent nose of an elephant, and the not easily traceable nose of a bird: the humorous, and, it seems to me, even slightly mocking and cruel contrivance of the Forming Spirit, that we shall always, unless we very carefully mind what we are about, think that a bird's beak is its nose:—the, to me, as an epicure, greatly disturbing, question, how much, when I see that a bird likes anything, it likes it at the tip of its bill, or somewhere inside. Then I wonder why elephants don't build houses with their noses, as birds build nests with their faces; —then, I wonder what elephants' and mares' nests are like, when they haven't got stables, or dens in menageries; finally, I think I had better stop thinking, and find out a fact or two, if I can, from any books in my possession, about the working tools of the bee.

And I will look first whether there is any available account of these matters in a book which I once all but knew by heart, 'Bingley's Animal Biography,' which, though it taught me little, made me desire to know more, and neither fatigued my mind nor polluted it, whereas most modern books on natural history only cease to be tiresome by becoming loathsome.

Yes,—I thought I had read it, and known it, once. "They" (the worker bees) "are so eager to afford mutual assistance" (bestial, as distinct from human competition, you observe), "and for this purpose so many of them crowd together, that their individual operations can scarcely be distinctly observed." (If I re-write this for Agnes, that last sentence shall stand thus: 'that it is difficult to see what any one is doing.') "It has, however, been discovered that their two jaws are the only instruments they employ in modelling and polishing the wax. With a little patience we perceive cells just begun, we likewise remark the quickness with which a bee moves its teeth against a small portion of the cell; this portion the animal, by repeated strokes on each side, smooths, renders compact, and reduces to a proper thinness."

Here I pause again,—ever so many questions occurring to me at once,—and of which, if Agnes is a thoughtful child, and not frightened from asking what she wants to know, by teachers who have been afraid they wouldn't be able to answer, she may, it is probable, put one or two herself. What are a

bee's teeth like? are they white or black? do they ever ache? can it bite hard with them? has it got anything to bite? Not only do I find no satisfaction in Mr. Bingley as to these matters, but in a grand, close-printed epitome of entomology* lately published simultaneously in London, Paris, and New York, and which has made me sick with disgust by its descriptions, at every other leaf I opened, of all that is horrible in insect life, I find, out of five hundred and seventy-nine figures, not one of a bee's teeth, the chief architectural instruments of the insect world. And I am the more provoked and plagued by this, because, my brains being, as all the rest of me, desultory and ill under control, I get into another fit of thinking what a bee's lips can be like, and of wondering why whole meadows-full of flowers are called "cows' lips" and none called "bees' lips." And finding presently, in Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, something really interesting about bees' tongues, and that they don't suck, but lick up honey, I go on wondering how soon we shall have a scientific Shakespeare printed for the use of schools, with Ariel's song altered into

'Where the bee licks, there lurk I,'

and "the singing masons building roofs of gold," explained to be merely automatic arrangements of lively viscera.

Shaking myself at last together again, I refer

* "The Insect World." Cassell, Petter, and Galpin.

to a really valuable book—Dr. Latham Ormerod's 'History of Wasps':—of which, if I could cancel all the parts that interest the Doctor himself, and keep only those which interest Agnes and me, and the pictures of wasps at the end,—I would make it a standard book in St. George's Library, even placing it in some proper subordinate relation to the Fourth Georgic: but as it is, I open in every other page on something about 'organs,' a word with which I do not care for Agnes's associating any ideas, at present, but those of a Savoyard and his monkey.

However, I find here, indeed, a diagram of a wasp's mouth; but as it only looks like what remains of a spider after being trodden on, and, as I find that this "mandibulate form of mouth" consists of

- "*a*, the labium, with the two labial palpi;
- b*, the maxilla, whose basilar portions bear at one end the cardo, at the other the hairy galea and the maxillary palpas;
- c*, the labrum, and *d*, the mandible,"

Agnes and I perceive that for the present there is an end of the matter for us; and retreat to our Bingley, there to console ourselves with hearing how Mr. Wildman, whose remarks on the management of bees are well known, possessed a secret by which "he could at any time cause a hive of bees to swarm upon his head, shoulders, or body, in a most surprising manner. He has been seen to drink a glass of wine, having at the same time the bees all

over his head and face more than an inch deep: several fell into the glass, but they did not sting him. He could even act the part of a general with them, by marshalling them in battle array upon a large table. There he divided them into regiments, battalions, and companies, according to military discipline, waiting only for his word of command. The moment he uttered the word 'march!' they began to march in a regular manner, like soldiers. To these insects he also taught so much politeness, that they never attempted to sting any of the numerous company."

Agnes, on reading this, is sure to ask me 'how he taught them?' Which is just what, as a student of new methods of education, I should like to know myself; and not a word is said on the matter: and we are presently pushed on into the history of the larger animal which I call a humble, but Agnes, a bumble, bee. Not, however, clearly knowing myself either what the ways of this kind are, or why they should be called humble, when I always find them at the top of a thistle rather than the bottom, I spend half my morning in hunting through my scientific books for information on this matter, and find whole pages of discussion whether the orange-tailed bee is the same as the white-tailed bee, but nothing about why either should be called humble or bumble:—at last I bethink me of the great despiser of natural history; and find that stout Samuel, with his good editor Mr. Todd, have given me all I want; but there is far more and better

authority for 'bumble' than I thought. However ; —this first guess of Johnson's own assuredly touches one popular, though it appears mistaken, reason for the Shakesperian form. "The humble bee is known to have no sting. The Scotch call a cow without horns a 'humble cow.'" But truly, I have never myself yet had clear faith enough in that absence of sting to catch a humble bee in my fingers ;* only I suppose Bottom would have warned Cobweb against that danger, if there had been such, as well as against being overflowed with the honey bag.† Red-hipped, Bottom calls them ; and yet I find nothing about their red hips anywhere in my books.

We have not done with the name yet, however. It is from the Teutonic 'hommolen' bombum edere : (in good time, some years hence, Agnes shall know what Teutons are,—what bombs are,—shall read my great passage in 'Unto this Last' about bombshells and peaches ; and shall know how distinct the Latin root of Edition and Editor is from that of Edification).

* Alas, that incredulity, the least amiable of the virtues, should often be the most serviceable ! Here is a pleasant little passage to fall in with, after Dr Johnson's "it is well-known" ! I find it in Ormerod, discussing the relative tenability of insects between the fingers for the study of their voices. "Wasps are obviously ill fitted for this purpose, and humble bees are no better ; they are so strong and so slippery that they need all our attention to prevent their putting their long stings through our gloves while we are examining them."

† Foolish of me ; a cobweb may be overthrown, but cannot be stung.

Next,—Chaucer, however, uses ‘humbling’ in the sense of humming or muttering: “like to the humblinge after the clap of a thunderinge.” So that one might classically say—a busy bee hums and a lazy bee humbles; only we can’t quite rest even in this; for under Bumblebee in Johnson, I find a quantity of other quotations and branched words, going off into silk and bombazine;—of which I shall only ask Agnes to remember—

“The Bittern, with his bump,
The crane, with his trump,”

and Chaucer’s single line,

“And as a bytorne bumblith in the mire.”

This, however, she should write out carefully, letter by letter, as soon as she had learned to write; and know at least that the image was used of a wife telling her husband’s faults—and, in good time, the whole story of Midas. Meanwhile, we remain satisfied to teach her to call her large brown friends, humble bees, because Shakespeare does, which is reason enough: and then the next thing I want to know, and tell her, is, why they are so fond of thistles. Before she can know this, I must be able to draw a thistle-blossom rightly for her; and as my botany has stood fast for some years at the point where I broke down in trying to draw the separate tubes of thistle-blossom, I can’t say any more on that point to-day: but, going on with my Bingley, I find four more species of bees named, which I should like to tell Agnes all I could about:

namely, the Mason Bee; the Wood-piercing Bee; and the one which Bingley calls the Garden-Bee; but which, as most bees are to be found in gardens, I shall myself call the Wool-gathering Bee; the Leaf-cutting Bee.

1. The mason bee, it appears, builds her nest of sand, which she chooses carefully grain by grain; then sticks, with bee-glue, as many grains together as she can carry, (like the blocks of brick we see our builders prepare for circular drains)—and builds her nest like a swallow's, in any angle on the south side of a wall; only with a number of cells inside, like—a monastery, shall we say?—each cell being about the size of a thimble. But these cells are not, like hive bees', regularly placed, but anyhow—the holes between filled up with solid block building;—and this disorder in the architecture of mason bees seems to be connected with moral disorder in their life; for, instead of being 'so eager to afford mutual assistance' that one can't see what each is doing, these mason bees, if they can, steal each other's nests, just like human beings, and fight, positively, like Christians. "Sometimes the two bees fly with such rapidity and force against each other that both fall to the ground"; and the way their cells are built—back of one to side of the other, and so on, is just like what a friend was telling me only the day before yesterday of the new cottages built by a speculative builder, who failed just afterwards, on some lots of land which a Lord of the Manor, near my friend, had just stolen from the public common and sold.

2. The wood-piercing bee cuts out her nest in decayed wood ; the nest being a hollow pipe like a chimney, or a group of such pipes, each divided by regular floors, into cells for the children ; one egg is put in each cell, and the cell filled with a paste made of the farina of flowers mixed with honey, for the young bee to eat when it is hatched. Now this carpentering work, I find, is done wholly by the wood-piercing bee's strong jaws ; but here again is no picture of her jaws, or the teeth in them ; though the little heaps of sawdust outside where she is working "are of grains nearly as large as those produced by a handsaw" ; and she has to make her floors of these grains, by gluing them in successive rings from the outside of her cell to the centre. Yes ; that's all very well ; but then I want to know if she cuts the bits of any particular shape, as, suppose, in flattish pieces like tiles, and if then she glues these sideways or edgeways in their successive rings.

But here is the prettiest thing of all in her work. It takes, of course, a certain time to collect the farina with which each cell is filled, and to build the floor between it and the nest ; so that the baby in the room at the bottom of the pipe will be born a day or two before the baby next above, and be ready to come out first ; and if it made its way upwards, would disturb the next baby too soon. So the mother puts them all upside down, with their feet—their tails, I should say—uppermost ; and then when she has finished her whole nest, to the

last cell at the top, she goes and cuts a way at the bottom of it, for the oldest of the family to make her way out, as she naturally will, head foremost, and so cause the others no discomfort by right of primogeniture.

3. The wool-gathering bee is described by White of Selborne, as "frequenting the Garden Campion, for the sake of its Tomentum." I lose half an hour in trying to find out the Garden Campion among the thirty-two volumes of old Sowerby: I find nothing but the sort of white-catchfly things that grow out of hollow globes, (which Mary of the Giessbach, by the way, spoken of in a former letter, first taught me to make pops with). I vainly try to find out what "Campion" means. Johnson fails me this time. "Campion, the name of a plant" I conjecture it must be simple for champion, "keeper of the field,"—and let that pass; but lose myself again presently in the derivation of Tomentum, and its relation to Tome, in the sense of a volume. Getting back out of all that, rather tired, I find at last in Bingley that the Garden Campion is *Agrostemma Coronaria* of Linnæus; and I look in my Linnæus, and find it described as *Tomentosum*; and then I try my two Sowerbys, ancient and modern, where I find nothing under *Agrostemma* but the corn-cockle, and so have to give in at last; but I can tell Agnes, at least, that there's some sort of pink which has a downy stem, and there's some sort of bee which strips off the down from the stalk of this pink, "running from the top to the bottom of a branch,

and shaving it bare with all the dexterity of a hoop-shaver."

Hoop-shaver? but I never saw so much as a hoop-shaver! Must see one on the first chance, only I suppose they make hoops by steam now.

"When it has got a bundle almost as large as itself it flies away, holding it secure between its chin and forelegs."

Chin?—what is a bee's chin like?

Then comes a story about a knight's finding the key 'wouldn't turn in the lock of his garden gate; and there being a wool-gathering bee's nest inside: and it seems she makes her cells or thimbles of this wool, but does not fill them with honey inside; so that I am in doubt whether the early life of the young bees who live in wood, and have plenty to eat, be not more enviable than the lot of those who live in wool and have no larders. I can't find any more about the wool-gatherer; and the fourth kind of bee, most interesting of all, must wait till next Fors' time, for there's a great deal to be learnt about her.

'And what of the St. George's Company meanwhile'?

Well, if I cannot show it some better method of teaching natural history than has been fallen upon by our recent Doctors, we need not begin our work at all. We cannot live in the country without hunting animals, or shooting them, unless we learn how to look at them.

I have had some good help about bees' tongues from a young correspondent at Merrow Grange, Guildford, and a very clear drawing, to which the subjoined piece of his last letter refers ; but I must not lose myself in microscopic questions just now :—

“The author of ‘The Microscope’ keeps to the old idea of bees sucking honey and not ‘licking it up,’ for he says, ‘The proboscis, being cylindrical, extracts the juice of the flower in a somewhat similar way to that of the butterfly.’ And of the tongue he says, ‘If a bee is attentively observed as it settles upon a flower, the activity and promptitude with which it uses the apparatus is truly surprising ; it lengthens the tongue, applies it to the bottom of the petals, then shortens it, bending and turning it in all directions, for the purpose of exploring the interior and removing the pollen, which it packs in the pockets in its hind legs, (by, he supposes, the two shorter feelers,) and forms the chief food for the working-bees.’ He says that when the waxen walls of the cells are completed, they are strengthened by a varnish collected from the buds of the poplar and other trees, which they smear over the cells by the aid of the wonderful apparatus. That part of the proboscis that looks something like a human head, he says, ‘can be considerably enlarged . . . and thus made to contain a larger quantity of the collected juice of the flowers ; at the same time it is in this cavity that the nectar is transformed into pure honey by some peculiar chemical process.’”

LETTER LII

VALE OF LUNE

I MUST steadily do a little bit more autobiography in every Fors, now, or I shall never bring myself to be of age before I die—or have to stop writing,—for which last turn of temper, or fortune, my friends, without exception, (and I hope—one or two of my enemies,) are, I find, praying with what devotion is in them.

My mother had, as she afterwards told me, solemnly devoted me to God before I was born ; in imitation of Hannah.

Very good women are remarkably apt to make away with their children prematurely, in this manner : the real meaning of the pious act being, that, as the sons of Zebedec are not, (or at least they hope not,) to sit on the right and left of Christ, in His kingdom, their own sons may perhaps, they think, in time be advanced to that respectable position in eternal life ; especially if they ask Christ very humbly for it every day ;—and they always forget in the most naïve way that the position is not His to give !

‘Devoting me to God,’ meant, as far as my mother

knew herself what she meant, that she would try to send me to college, and make a clergyman of me: and I was accordingly bred for 'the Church.' My father, who—rest be to his soul—had the exceedingly bad habit of yielding to my mother in large things and taking his own way in little ones, allowed me, without saying a word, to be thus withdrawn from the sherry trade as an unclean thing; not without some pardonable participation in my mother's ultimate views for me. For, many and many a year afterwards, I remember while he was speaking to one of our artist friends, who admired Raphael, and greatly regretted my endeavours to interfere with that popular taste,—while my father and he were condoling with each other on my having been impudent enough to think I could tell the public about Turner and Raphael,—instead of contenting myself, as I ought, with explaining the way of their souls' salvation to them—and what an amiable clergyman was lost in me,—“Yes,” said my father, with tears in his eyes—(true and tender tears—as ever father shed,) “he would have been a Bishop”

Luckily for me, my mother, under these distinct impressions of her own duty, and with such latent hopes of my future eminence, took me very early to church;—where, in spite of my quiet habits, and my mother's golden vinaigrette, always indulged to me there, and there only, with its lid unclasped that I might see the wreathed open pattern above the sponge, I found the bottom of the pew so extremely

dull a place to keep quiet in (my best story-books being also taken away from me in the morning,) that—as I have somewhere said before—the horror of Sunday used even to cast its prescient gloom as far back in the week as Friday—and all the glory of Monday, with church seven days removed again, was no equivalent for it.

Notwithstanding, I arrived at some abstract in my own mind of the Rev. Mr. Howell's sermons; and occasionally—in imitation of him—preached a sermon at home over the red sofa cushions;—this performance being always called for by my mother's dearest friends, as the great accomplishment of my childhood. The sermon was—I believe—some eleven words long;—very exemplary, it seems to me, in that respect—and I still think must have been the purest gospel, for I know it began with 'People, be good.'

We seldom had company, even on week days; and I was never allowed to come down to dessert, until much later in life—when I was able to crack nuts neatly. I was then permitted to come down to crack other people's nuts for them; (I hope they liked the ministration)—but never to have any myself; nor anything else of dainty kind, either then or at other times. Once, at Hunter Street, I recollect my mother's giving me three raisins, in the forenoon—out of the store cabinet; and I remember perfectly the first time I tasted custard, in our lodgings in Norfolk Street—where we had gone while the house was being painted, or cleaned,

or something. My father was dining in the front room, and did not finish his custard; and my mother brought me the bottom of it into the back room.

I've no more space for garrulity in this letter, having several past bits of note to bring together.

BOLTON BRIDGE, *24th January, 1875*

I have been driving by the old road * from Coniston here, through Kirby Lonsdale, and have seen more ghastly signs of modern temper than I yet had believed possible.

The valley of the Lune at Kirby is one of the loveliest scenes in England—therefore, in the world. Whatever moorland hill, and sweet river, and English forest foliage can be at their best, is gathered there; and chiefly seen from the steep bank which falls to the stream side from the upper part of the town itself. There, a path leads from the churchyard, out of which Turner made his drawing of the valley, along the brow of the wooded bank,

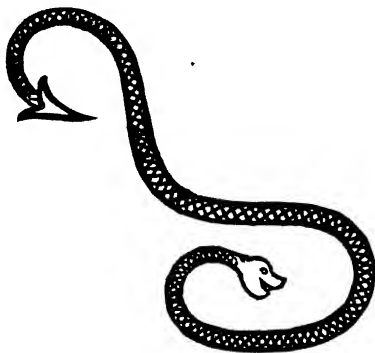
* Frightened, (I hear it was guessed in a gossiping newspaper,) by the Shipton accident, and disgusted afterwards by unexpected expenses. The ingenious British public cannot conceive of anybody's estimating danger before accidents as well as after them, or amusing himself by driving from one place to another, instead of round the Park. There was some grain of truth in the important rumour, however. I have posted, in early days, up and down England (and some other countries) not once nor twice; and I grumbled, in Yorkshire, at being charged twenty pence instead of eighteen-pence a mile. But the pace was good, where any trace of roads remained under casual outcasting of cinders and brickbats.

to open downs beyond; a little bye footpath on the right descending steeply through the woods to a spring among the rocks of the shore. I do not know in all my own country, still less in France or Italy, a place more naturally divine, or a more priceless possession of true "Holy Land."

Well, the population of Kirby cannot, it appears, in consequence of their recent civilization, any more walk, in summer afternoons, along the brow of this bank, without a fence. I at first fancied this was because they were usually unable to take care of themselves at that period of the day: but saw presently I must be mistaken in that conjecture, because the fence they have put up requires far more sober minds for safe dealing with it than ever the bank did; being of thin, strong, and finely sharpened skewers, on which if a drunken man rolled heavily, he would assuredly be impaled at the armpit. They have carried this lovely decoration down on both sides of the wood-path to the spring, with warning notice on ticket,—“This path leads only to the Ladies’* well—all trespassers will be prosecuted”—and the iron rails leave so narrow footing that I myself scarcely ventured to go down, —the morning being frosty, and the path slippery,—lest I should fall on the spikes. The well at the bottom was choked up and defaced, though ironed all round, so as to look like the ‘pound’ of old days for strayed cattle: they had been felling the trees

too; and the old wood had protested against the fence in its own way, with its last root and branch,—for the falling trunks had crashed through the iron grating in all directions, and left it in already rusty and unseemly rags, like the last refuse of a railroad accident, beaten down among the dead leaves.

Just at the dividing of the two paths, the improving mob* of Kirby had got two seats put for themselves—to admire the prospect from, forsooth. And these seats were to be artistic, if Minerva were propitious,—in the style of Kensington. So they are supported on iron legs, representing each, as far as any rational conjecture can extend—the Devil's tail pulled off, with a goose's head stuck on the wrong end of it. Thus: and what is more—two of the geese-heads are without eyes (I stooped down under the seat and rubbed the frost off them to make sure,) and the whole symbol is perfect, therefore,—as typical of our English populace, fashionable and



* I include in my general term 'mob,' lords, squires, clergy, parish beadies, and all other states and conditions of men concerned in the proceedings described.

other, which seats itself to admire prospects, in the present day.

Now, not a hundred paces from these seats there is a fine old church, with Norman door, and lancet east windows, and so on; and this, of course, has been duly patched, botched, plastered, and primmed up; and is kept as tidy as a new pin. For your English clergyman keeps his own stage properties, nowadays, as carefully as a poor actress her silk stockings. Well, all that, of course, is very fine; but, actually, the people go through the churchyard to the path on the hill-brow, making the new iron railing an excuse to pitch their dust-heaps, and whatever of worse they have to get rid of, crockery and the rest,—down *over the fence* among the prim-roses and violets to the river,—and the whole blessed shore underneath, rough sandstone rock throwing the deep water off into eddies among shingle, is one waste of filth, town-drainage, broken saucepans, tannin, and mill-refuse.

The same morning I had to water my horses at the little village of Clapham, between Kirby and Settle. There is another exquisite rocky brook there; and an old bridge over it. I went down to the brook-side to see the bridge; and found myself instantly, of course, stopped by a dunghill,—and that of the vilest human sort; while, just on the other side of the road,—not twenty yards off,—were the new schools, with their orthodox Gothic belfry—all spick and span—and the children playing fashionably at hoop, round them, in a narrow paved

yard—like debtor children in the Fleet, in imitation of the manners and customs of the West End. High over all, the Squire's house, resplendent on the hillside, within sound alike of belfry, and brook.

I got on here, to Bolton Bridge, the same day ; and walked down to the Abbey in the evening, to look again at Turner's subject of the Wharfe shore. If there is one spot in England, where human creatures pass or live, which one would expect to find, in *spite* of their foul existence, still clean—it is Bolton Park. But to my final and utter amazement, I had not taken two steps by the waterside at the loveliest bend of the river below the stepping-stones, before I found myself again among broken crockery, cinders, cockle-shells, and tinkers' refuse ;—a large old gridiron forming the principal point of effect and interest among the pebbles. The filth must be regularly carried past the Abbey, and across the Park, to the place.

But doubtless, in Bolton Priory, amiable school teachers tell their little Agneses the story of the white doe ;—and duly make them sing, in psalm tune, “As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks.”

Very certainly, nevertheless, the young ladies of Luneside and Wharfedale don't pant in the least after their waterbrooks ; and this is the saddest part of the business to me. Pollution of rivers !—yes, that is to be considered also ;—but pollution of young ladies' minds to the point of never caring to scramble by a riverside, so long as they can have

their church-curate and his altar-cloths to their fancy—*this* is the horrible thing, in my own wild way of thinking. That shingle of the Lune, under Kirby, reminded me, as if it had been yesterday, of a summer evening by a sweeter shore still: the edge of the North Inch of Perth, where the Tay is wide, just below Scone; and the snowy quartz pebbles decline in long banks under the ripples of the dark clear stream.

My Scotch cousin Jessie, eight years old, and I, ten years old, and my Croydon cousin, Bridget, a slim girl of fourteen, were all wading together, here and there; and of course getting into deep water as far as we could,—my father and mother and aunt watching us,—till at last, Bridget, having the longest legs, and, taking after her mother, the shortest conscience,—got in so far, and with her petticoats so high, that the old people were obliged to call to her, though hardly able to call, for laughing; and I recollect staring at them, and wondering what they were laughing at. But alas, by Lune shore, now, there are no pretty girls to be seen holding their petticoats up. Nothing but old saucepans and tannin—or worse—as signs of modern civilization.

‘But how fine it is to have iron skewers for our fences; and no trespassing, (except by lords of the manor on poor men’s ground,) and pretty legs exhibited where they can be so without impropriety, and with due advertisement to the public beforehand; and iron legs to our chairs, also, in the style of Kensington!’ Doubtless; but considering that

Kensington is a school of natural Science as well as Art, it seems to me that these Kirby representations of the Ophidia are slightly vague. Perhaps, however, in conveying that tenderly sagacious expression into his serpent's head, and burnishing so acutely the brandished sting in his tail, the Kirby artist has been under the theological instructions of the careful Minister who has had his church restored so prettily ;—only then the Minister himself must have been, without knowing it, under the directions of another person, who had an intimate interest in the matter. For there is more than failure of natural history in this clumsy hardware. It is indeed a matter of course that it should be clumsy, for the English have always been a dull nation in decorative art : and I find, on looking at things here afresh after long work in Italy, that our most elaborate English sepulchral work, as the Cockayne tombs at Ashbourne and the Dudley tombs at Warwick, (not to speak of Queen Elizabeth's in Westminster !) are yet, compared to Italian sculpture of the same date, no less barbarous than these goose heads of Kirby would appear beside an asp head of Milan. But the tombs of Ashbourne or Warwick are honest, though blundering, efforts to imitate what was really felt to be beautiful ; whereas the serpents of Kirby are ordered and shaped by the "least erected spirit that fell," in the very likeness of himself !

For observe the method and circumstance of their manufacture. You dig a pit for ironstone, and

heap a mass of refuse on fruitful land ; you blacken your God-given sky, and consume your God-given fuel, to melt the iron ; you bind your labourer to the Egyptian toil of its castings and forgings ; then, to refine his mind you send him to study Raphael at Kensington ; and with all this cost, filth, time, and misery, you at last produce—the devil's tail for your sustenance, instead of an honest three-legged stool.

You do all this that men may live—think you ? Alas—no ; the real motive of it all is that the fashionable manufacturer may live in a palace, getting his fifty per cent. commission on the work which he has taken out of the hands of the old village carpenter, who would have cut two stumps of oak in two minutes out of the copse, which would have carried your bench and you triumphantly,—to the end of both your times.

However, I must get back to my bees' heads and tails, to-day ;—what a serpent's are like in their true type of Earthly Injustice, it may be worth our while to see also, if we can understand the “sad-eyed justice” first.

Sad-eyed ! Little did Shakespeare think, I fancy, how many eyes the sad-eyed Justice had ! or how ill she saw with them. I continually notice the bees at Brantwood flying rapturously up to the flowers on my wall paper, and knocking themselves against them, again and again, unconvinced of their fallacy ; and it is no compliment to the wall paper or its artist, neither—for the flowers are only

conventional ones, copied from a radiant Bishop's cloak of the fifteenth century.

It is curious too, that although before coming to the leaf-cutting bee, Bingley expatiates on the Poppy bees' luxurious tapestry, cut from the scarlet poppy, he never considers whether she could *see* it, or not, underground—(unless by help of the fiery glowworms' eyes)—and still less, how long the cut leaves would remain scarlet. Then I am told wonderful things of the clasping of the curtains of her little tabernacle;—but when the curtains dry, and shrink, what then?

Let us hear what he tells us of the Rose bee, however—in full.

“These bees construct cylindrical nests of the leaves of the rose and other trees. These nests are sometimes of the depth of six inches, and generally consist of six or seven cells, each shaped like a thimble.* They are formed with the convex end of one fitting into the open end of another. The portions of the leaf of which they are made are not glued together,† nor are they any otherwise fastened, than in the nicety of their adjustment to each other; and yet they do not admit the liquid honey to drain through them. The interior surface of each cell consists of three pieces of leaf, of equal size, narrow at one end, but gradually widening to the other,

* They are round at the end, but do not taper.

† An Indian one, patiently investigated for me by Mr Burgess, was fastened with glue which entirely defied cold water, and yielded only to the kettle.

where the width equals half the length. One side of each of these pieces, is the serrated margin of the leaf. In forming the cell, the pieces of leaf are made to lap one over the other, (the serrated side always outermost,) till a tube is thus formed, coated with three or four, or more layers. In coating these tubes, the provident little animal is careful to lay the middle of each piece of leaf over the margins of others, so as, by this means, both to cover and strengthen the junctions. At the closed or narrow end of the cell, the leaves are bent down so as to form a convex termination. When a cell is formed, the next care of the Bee is to fill it with honey and pollen, which, being collected chiefly from the thistles, form a rose-coloured paste. With these the cell is filled to within about half a line of its orifice; and the female then deposits in it an egg, and closes it with three perfectly circular pieces of leaf, which coincide so exactly with the walls of the cylindrical cell, as to be retained in their situation without any gluten.* After this covering is fitted in, there still remains a hollow, which receives the convex end of the succeeding cell. In this manner the patient and indefatigable animal proceeds, till her whole cylinder of six or seven cells is completed.

“This is generally formed under the surface of the ground,† in a tubular passage, which it entirely

* She bites them round the edge roughly enough; but pushes them down with a tucked-up rim, quite tight, like the first covering of a pot of preserve.

† Or in old wood.

fills, except at the entrance. If the labour of these insects be interrupted, or the edifice be deranged, they exhibit astonishing perseverance in setting it again to rights.

“Their mode of cutting pieces out of the leaves for their work, deserves particular notice. When one of these Bees selects a rose-bush with this view, she flies round or hovers over it for some seconds, as if examining for the leaves best suited to her purpose. When she has chosen one, she alights upon it, sometimes on the upper, and sometimes on the under surface, or not unfrequently on its edge, so that the margin passes between her legs. Her first attack, which is generally made the moment she alights, is usually near the footstalk, with her head turned towards the point. As soon as she begins to cut, she is wholly intent on her labour; nor does she cease until her work is completed. The operation is performed by means of her jaws, with as much expedition as we could exert with a pair of scissors. As she proceeds, she holds the margin of the detached part between her legs, in such a manner that the section keeps giving way to her, and does not interrupt her progress. She makes her incision in a curved line, approaching the midrib of the leaf at first; but when she has reached a certain point, she recedes from this towards the margin, still cutting in a curve. When she has nearly detached from the leaf the portion she has been employed upon, she balances her little wings for flight, lest its weight should carry her to

the ground ; and the very moment it parts, she flies off in triumph, carrying it in a bent position between her legs, and perpendicularly to her body."

Now in this account, the first thing I catch at is the clue to the love of bees for thistles. "Their pollen makes a rose-coloured paste with their honey;" (I think some of my Scottish friends might really take measures to get some pure thistle honey made by their bees. I once worked all the working hours I had to spare for a fortnight, to clear a field of thistles by the side of the Tummel under Schehallien: perhaps Nature meant, all the while, its master and me to let it alone, and put a hive or two upon it.)

Secondly. The description of the bee's tubular house, though sufficiently clear, is only intelligible to me, though I know something of geometry, after some effort ;—it would be wholly useless to Agnes, unless she were shown how to be a leaf-cutting bee herself, and invited to construct, or endeavour to construct, the likeness of a bee's nest with paper and scissors.

What—in school hours ?

Yes, certainly,—in the very best of school-hours : this would be one of her advanced lessons in Geometry.

For little Agnes should assuredly learn the elements of Geometry, but she should at first call it 'Earth measuring'; and have her early lessons in it, in laying out her own garden.

Her older companions, at any rate, must be far

enough advanced in the science to attempt this bee problem; of which you will find the terms have to be carefully examined, and somewhat completed. So much, indeed, do they stand in need of farther definition, that I should have supposed the problem inaccurately given, unless I had seen the bee cut a leaf myself. But I have seen her do it, and can answer for the absolute accuracy of the passage describing her in that operation.

The pieces of leaf, you read, are to be narrow at one end, but gradually widen to the other, where the width equals half the length.

And we have to cut these pieces with curved sides; for one side of them is to be the serrated edge of a rose leaf, and the other side is to be cut in a curved line beginning near the root of the leaf. I especially noticed this curved line as the bee cut it; but like an ass, as often I have been on such occasions, I followed the bee instead of gathering the remnant leaf, so that I can't draw the curve with certainty.

Now each of my four volumes of Bingley has five or more plates in it. These plates are finished line engravings, with, in most cases, elaborate landscape backgrounds; reeds for the hippopotamus, trees for the monkeys, conical mountains for the chamois, and a magnificent den with plenty of straw for the lioness and cubs, in frontispiece.

Any one of these landscape backgrounds required

the severe labour of the engraver's assistant for at least three days to produce it,—or say two months' hard work, for the whole twenty and odd plates. And all the result of two months' elaborate work put together, was not worth to me, nor would be to any man, woman, or child, worth—what an accurate outline of a leaf-cutting bee's segment of leaf would have been, drawn with truth and precision. And ten minutes would have been enough to draw it; and half an hour to cut it.

But not only I cannot find it in my old book, but I know it is not in the grand modern Cuvier, and I don't believe it is findable anywhere. I won't go on with Agnes's lesson at guess, however, till I get some help from kind Dr. Gray, at the British Museum. To-day, I must content myself with a closing word or two about zoological moralities.

After having, to my best ability, thus busied and informed little Agnes concerning her bees and their operations, am I farther to expatiate on the exemplary character of the bee? Is she to learn "How doth," etc. (and indeed there never was a country in which more than in her own, it was desirable that shining hours should be taken advantage of when they come)? But, above all, am I to tell her of the Goodness and Wisdom of God in making such amiable and useful insects?

Well, before I proceed to ask her to form her very important opinions upon the moral character

of God, I shall ask her to observe that all insects are not equally moral, or useful. *

It is possible she may have noticed—beforehand—some, of whose dispositions she may be doubtful; something, hereafter, I shall have to tell her of locust and hornet, no less than of bee; and although in general I shall especially avoid putting disagreeable or ugly things before her eyes, or into her mind, I should certainly require her positively, once for all, to know the sort of life led by creatures of at least alloyed moral nature,—such, for instance, as the ‘Turner Savage’ which, indeed, “lives in the haunts of men, whom it never willingly offends; but is the terror of all smaller insects. It inhabits holes in the earth on the side of hills and cliffs; and recesses that it forms for itself in the mud-walls of cottages and outhouses. The mud-wall of a cottage at Peterborough, in Northamptonshire, was observed to be frequented by these creatures, and on examination it was found to be wrought, by their operations, into the appearance of Honeycomb.”

The appearance only, alas! for although these creatures thus like to live in the neighbourhood of a Bishop, and though “there are none which display more affection for their offspring,”—they by no means live by collection of treasures of sweet dew. “They are excessively fierce, and, without hesitation, attack insects much larger than themselves. Their strength is very great, their jaws are hard and sharp, and their stings are armed with poison, which

suddenly proves fatal to most of the creatures with which they engage. The 'Sphex' (generic name of the family) seizes, with the greatest boldness, on the creature it attacks, giving a stroke with amazing force, then falling off, to rest from the fatigue of the exertion, and to enjoy the victory. It keeps, however, a steady eye on the object it has struck, until it dies, and then drags it to its nest for the use of its young. The number of insects which this creature destroys, is almost beyond conception, fifty scarcely serving it for a meal. The mangled remains of its prey, scattered round the mouth of its retreat, sufficiently betray the sanguinary inhabitant. The eyes, the filament that serves as a brain, and a small part of the contents of the body, are all that the Sphex devours."

I cannot, therefore, insist, for the present, upon either pointing a moral, or adorning a tale, for Agnes, with entomological instances; but the name of the insect, at which the (insect) world might grow pale, if it were capable of pallor,—might be made, at least, memorable, and not uninteresting, to the boys in the Latin class, by making them first understand the power of the preposition 'ex,' in the two pleasant senses of *examen*, and the one unpleasant sense of 'examiner'—and then observe, (carefully first distinguishing between play with letters and real derivation,) that if you put R for Right, before ex, you have 'Rex'; if you put L, for Love, before ex, you have 'lex'; if you put G, for George, and R, for Rural, before ex, you have 'grex'; and then

if you put S, for Speculation, P, for Peculation, and H, the immortal possessor of Pie, before ex, you have 'Sphex'; pleasing and accurate type of the modern carnivorous Economist, who especially discerns of his British public, 'the eyes and small filament that serves as a brain.'

LETTER LIII

THESE BE YOUR GODS

BRANTWOOD,

Good Friday, 1875.

I AM ashamed to go on with my own history to-day ; for though, as already seen, I was not wholly unacquainted with the practice of fasting, at times of the year when it was not customary with Papists, our Lent became to us a kind of moonlight Christmas, and season of reflected and soft festivity. For our strictly Protestant habits of mind rendering us independent of absolution, on Shrove Tuesday we were chiefly occupied in the preparation of pancakes,—my nurse being dominant on that day over the cook in all things, her especially nutritive art of browning, and fine legerdemain in turning, pancakes, being recognized as inimitable. The interest of Ash-Wednesday was mainly—whether the bits of egg should be large or small in the egg-sauce ;—nor do I recollect having any ideas connected with the day's name, until I was puzzled by the French of it when I fell in love with a Roman Catholic French girl, as hereafter to be related :—only, by the way, let me note, as I chance now to remember, two others of my main occupations of an exciting character in Hunter Street :

watching, namely, the dustmen clear out the ash-hole, and the coalmen fill the coal-cellar through the hole in the pavement, which soon became to me, when surrounded by its cone of débris, a sublime representation of the crater of a volcanic mountain. Of these imaginative delights I have no room to speak in this Fors; nor of the debates which used to be held for the two or three days preceding Good Friday, whether the hot-cross-buns should be plain, or have carraway seeds in them. For, my nurse not being here to provide any such dainties for me, and the black-plague wind which has now darkened the spring for five years,* veiling all the hills with sullen cloud, I am neither in a cheerful nor a religious state of mind; and am too much in the temper of the disciples who forsook Him, and fled, to be able to do justice to the childish innocence of belief, which, in my mother, was too constant to need resuscitation, or take new colour, from fast or festival.

As soon as I was able to read with fluency, she began a course of Bible work with me, which never ceased till I went to Oxford. She read alternate verses with me, watching, at first, every intonation of my voice, and correcting the false ones, till she made me understand the verse, if within my reach, rightly, and energetically. It might be beyond me altogether; *that* she did not care about; but she

* See my first notice of it in the beginning of the Fors of August 1871; and farther account of it in "The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century," 1884.

made sure that as soon as I got hold of it at all, I should get hold of it by the right end.

In this way she began with the first verse of Genesis and went straight through to the last verse of the Apocalypse; hard names, numbers, Levitical law, and all; and began again at Genesis the next day; if a name was hard, the better the exercise in pronunciation,—if a chapter was tiresome, the better lesson in patience,—if loathsome, the better lesson in faith that there was some use in its being so outspoken. After our chapters, (from two to three a day, according to their length, the first thing after breakfast, and no interruption from servants allowed,—none from visitors, who either joined in the reading or had to stay upstairs,—and none from any visitings or excursions, except real travelling,) I had to learn a few verses by heart, or repeat, to make sure I had not lost, something of what was already known; and, with the chapters above enumerated, (Letter XLII.), I had to learn the whole body of the fine old Scottish paraphrases, which are good, melodious, and forceful verse; and to which, together with the Bible itself, I owe the first cultivation of my ear in sound.

It is strange that of all the pieces of the Bible which my mother thus taught me, that which cost me most to learn, and which was, to my child's mind, chiefly repulsive—the 119th Psalm—has now become of all the most precious to me, in its overflowing and glorious passion of love for the Law of God: "Oh, how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day; I have refrained my feet

from every evil way, that I might keep Thy word";—as opposed to the ever-echoing words of the modern money-loving fool: "Oh, how hate I thy law! it is my abomination all the day; my feet are swift in running to mischief, and I have done all the things I ought not to have done, and left undone all I ought to have done; have mercy upon me, miserable sinner,—and grant that I, worthily lamenting my sins and acknowledging my wretchedness, may obtain of Thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness,—and give me my long purse here and my eternal Paradise there, all together, for Christ's sake, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory," etc.

All the teaching of God, and of the nature He formed round Man, is not only mysterious, but, if received with any warp of mind, deceptive, and intentionally deceptive. The distinct and repeated assertions of this in the conduct and words of Christ are the most wonderful things, it seems to me, and the most terrible, in all the recorded action of the wisdom of Heaven. "To *you*" (His disciples) "it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom,—but to others, in parables, that, hearing, they might *not* understand." Now this is written not for the twelve only, but for all disciples of Christ in all ages,—of whom the sign is one and unmistakable: "They have forsaken *all* that they have"; while those who "say they are Jews and are not, but do lie," or who say they are Christians and are not, but do lie, try to compromise with Christ,—to give

Him a part, and keep back a part ;—this being the Lie of lies, the Ananias lie, visited always with spiritual death.*

There is a curious chapter on almsgiving, by Miss Yonge, in one of the late numbers of the *Monthly Packet*, (a good magazine, though, on the whole, and full of nice writing,) which announces to *her* disciples, that “at least the tenth of their income is God’s part.” Now, in the name of the Devil, and of Baal to back him,—are nine parts, then, of all *we* have—our own ? or theirs ? The tithe may, indeed, be set aside for some special purpose—for the maintenance of a priesthood—or as by the St. George’s Company, for distant labour, or any other purpose out of their own immediate range of action. But to the Charity or Alms of men—to Love, and to the God of Love, *all* their substance is due—and all their strength—and all their time. That is the first commandment : Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy strength and soul. Yea, says the false disciple—but not with all my money. And of these it is written, after that thirty-third verse of Luke xiv. : “Salt is good ; but if the salt have lost his savour, it is neither fit for the land nor the dunghill He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

Now in Holbein’s great sermon against wealth, the engraving, in the Dance of Death, of the miser and beggar, he chose for his text the verse : “He that stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, and shall not be heard” And he

* Isaiah xxviii. 17 and 18.

shows that the ear is thus deafened by being filled with a murmuring of its own : and how the ear thus becomes only as a twisted shell, with the sound of the far-away ocean of Hell in it for ever, he teaches us, in the figure of the fiend which I engraved for you in the seventh of these letters, abortive, fingerless, contemptible, mechanical, incapable ;—blowing the winds of death out of its small machine : Behold, *this* is your God, you modern Israel, which has brought you up out of the land of Egypt in which your fathers toiled for bread with their not abortive hands ; and set your feet in the large room, of Usury, and in the broad road to Death !

Now the Parables of the New Testament are so constructed that to men in this insolent temper, they are *necessarily* misleading. It is very awful that it should be so ; but that is the fact. Why prayer should be taught by the story of the unjust judge ; use of present opportunity by that of the unjust steward ; and use of the gifts of God by that of the hard man who reaped where he had not sown, —there is no human creature wise enough to know ; —but there are the traps set ; and every slack judge, cheating servant, and gnawing usurer may, if he will, approve himself in these.

“Thou knewest that I was a hard man” Yes —and if God were also a hard God, and reaped where *He* had not sown—the conclusion would be true that earthly usury was right. But which of God’s gifts to us are *not* His own ?

The meaning of the parable, heard with ears

unbesotted, is this:—"You, among hard and unjust men, yet suffer their claim to the return of what they never gave; you suffer *them* to reap, where they have not strawed.—But to me, the Just Lord of your life—whose is the breath in your nostrils, whose the fire in your blood, who gave you light and thought, and the fruit of earth and the dew of heaven,—to me, of all this gift, will you return no fruit but only the dust of your bodies, and the wreck of your souls?"

Nevertheless, the Parables have still their living use, as well as their danger; but the Psalter has become practically dead; and the form of repeating it in the daily service only deadens the phrases of it by familiarity. I have occasion to-day, before going on with any work for Agnes, to dwell on another piece of this writing of the father of Christ,—which, read in its full meaning, will be as new to us as the first-heard song of a foreign land.

I will print it first in the Latin, and in the letters and form in which it was read by our Christian sires.*

* I have written it out from a perfect English psalter of early thirteenth century work, with St. Edward, St. Edmund, and St. Cuthbert in its calendar; it probably having belonged to the cathedral of York. The writing is very full, but quick; meant for service more than beauty; illuminated sparingly, but with extreme care. Its contractions are curiously varied and capricious: thus, here in the fifth verse, *c* in *constituisti* stands for 'con' merely by being turned the wrong way. I prefer its text, nevertheless, to that of more elaborate MSS, for when very great attention is paid to the writing, there are apt to be mistakes in the words. In the best thirteenth-century service-book I have, 'tuos' in the third verse is written 'meos.'

Domine dominus noster qm
 admirabile est nomen tuum
 in unibersa terra. Quoniam ele
 data est magnificentia tua super
 celos. Ex ore infantium t lacten
 cium pfecisti. laudem ppter ini
 micos tuos ut destruas inimici
 t ultorem. Quoniam videro celos
 tuos opera digitor. tuor. lunam t
 stellas que tu fundasti Quid est h
 quod memor es ejus, au filius hois
 quia visitas eum. Minuisti eum
 paulominu; ab angelis, gloria i ho
 nore coronasti eum t constituisti eum
 super opera manuum tuar. Omnia
 subiecisti sub pedibz ejus, obes t bo
 ves unibsas, insuper t pecora cam
 pi. Volucres celi t pisces maris q
 pambulant semitas maris. Domi
 ne dominus noster quam admi
 rabile est nomen tuum in unibsa
 terra.

I translate literally; the Septuagint confirming the Vulgate in the differences from our common rendering, several of which are important.

- “ 1. Oh Lord, our own Lord, how admirable is thy Name in all the earth !
2. Because thy magnificence is set above the heavens.
3. Out of the mouth of children and sucklings thou hast perfected praise, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest scatter the enemy and avenger.
4. Since I see thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast founded,
5. What is man that thou rememberest him, or the son of man, that thou lookest on him ?
6. Thou hast lessened him a little from the angels ; thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over all the works of thy hands
7. Thou hast put all things under his feet ; sheep, and all oxen—and the flocks of the plain.
8. The birds of the heaven and the fish of the sea, and all that walk in the paths of the sea.
9. Oh Lord, our own Lord, how admirable is thy Name in all the earth ! ”

Note in Verses 1 and 9.—Domine, Dominus noster, our *own* Lord,—Κύριε, ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν,—claiming thus the Fatherhood. The ‘Lord our Governour’ of the Prayer Book entirely loses the meaning. How *admirable* is Thy Name! θαυμαστόν, ‘wonderful,’ as in Isaiah, “His name shall be called Wonderful, the Counsellor.” Again our translation ‘excellent’ loses the meaning.

Verse 2.—Thy magnificence. Literally, 'thy greatness in working' (Gk. *μεγαλοπρέπεια*—splendour in aspect), distinguished from mere 'glory' or greatness in fame.

Verse 3.—Sidney has it:

"From sucklings hath thy honour sprung,
Thy force hath flowed from babies' tongue."

The meaning of this difficult verse is given by implication in Matt. xxi 16 And again, that verse, like all the other great teachings of Christ, is open to a terrific misinterpretation;—namely, the popular evangelical one, that children should be teachers and preachers,—("cheering mother, cheering father, from the Bible true"). The lovely meaning of the words of Christ, which this vile error hides, is that children, *remaining children*, and uttering, out of their own hearts, such things as their Maker puts there, are pure in sight, and perfect in praise.*

Verse 4.—The moon and the stars which thou hast founded—'fundasti'—*ἐθεμελίωσας*. It is much more than 'ordained': the idea of stable placing in space being the main one in David's mind. And it remains to this day the wonder of wonders in all wise men's minds. The earth swings round the sun,—yes, but what holds the sun? The sun

* Compare the 'Crown of Wild Olive,' § 47.

swings round something else. Be it so,—then, what else?

Sidney:—

“When I upon the heavens do look,
Which all from thee their essence took,
When moon and stars my *thought* beholdeth,
Whose life no life but of thee holdeth.”

Verse 5.—That thou lookest on him; ἐπισκέπτῃ αὐτόν, ‘art a bishop to him.’ The Greek word is the same in the verse “I was sick and ye *visited* me.”

Verse 6—Thou hast lessened him;—perhaps better, thou hast made him, but by a little, less than the angels: ἡλάττωσας αὐτόν βραχύ τι. The inferiority is not of present position merely, but of scale in being.

Verse 7.—Sheep, and all oxen, and the *flocks of the plain*: κτήνη τοῦ πεδίου. Beasts for service in the plain, traversing great spaces,—camel and horse. ‘Pecora,’ in Vulgate, includes all ‘pecunia,’ or property in animals.

Verse 8.—In the Greek, “that walk the paths of the seas” is only an added description of fish, but the meaning of it is without doubt to give an expanded sense—a generalization of fish, so as to include the whale, seal, tortoise, and their like. Neither whales nor seals, however, from what I hear of modern fishing, are likely to walk the paths

of the sea much longer ; and Sidney's verse becomes mere satire :—

“The bird, free burgesse of the aire,
The fish, of sea the native heire,
And what things els of waters traceth
The unworn pathes, his rule embraceth
Oh Lord, that rul'st our mortal lyne,
How through the world thy name doth shine ”

These being, as far as I can trace them, the literal meanings of each verse, the entire purport of the psalm is that the Name, or *knowledge*, of God was admirable to David, and the power and kingship of God recognizable to him, through the power and kingship of man, His vicegerent on the earth, as the angels are in heavenly places. And that final purport of the psalm is evermore infallibly true,—namely, that when men rule the earth rightly, and feel the power of their own souls over it, and its creatures, as a beneficent and authoritative one, they recognize the power of higher spirits also ; and the Name of God becomes ‘hallowed’ to them, admirable and wonderful ; but if they abuse the earth and its creatures, and become mere contentious brutes upon it, instead of order-commanding kings, the Name of God ceases to be admirable to them, and His power to be felt ; and gradually, license and ignorance prevailing together, even what memories of law or Deity remain to them become intolerable ; and in the exact contrary to David's—“My soul thirsteth for God, for the Living God ; when shall I come and appear before God ?”—you have the

consummated desire and conclusive utterance of the modern republican :

“S'il y avait un Dieu, il faudrait le fusiller.”

Now, whatever chemical or anatomical facts may appear to our present scientific intelligences, inconsistent with the Life of God, the historical fact is that no happiness nor power has ever been attained by human creatures unless in that thirst for the presence of a Divine King ; and that nothing but weakness, misery, and death have ever resulted from the desire to destroy their King, and to have thieves and murderers released to them instead. Also this fact is historically certain,—that the Life of God is not to be discovered by reasoning, but by obeying ; that on doing what is plainly ordered, the wisdom and presence of the Orderer become manifest ; that only so His way can be known on earth, and His saving health among all nations ; and that on disobedience always follows darkness, the fore-runner of death.

And now for corollary on the eighth Psalm, read the first and second of Hebrews, and to the twelfth verse of the third, slowly ; fitting the verse of the psalm—“*lunam et stellas quæ tu fundasti*,” with “Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth” ; and then noting how the subjection which is merely of the lower creature, in the psalm, becomes the subjection of all things, and at last of death itself, in the victory foretold to those who are faithful to their Captain, made perfect

through sufferings ; their Faith, observe, consisting primarily in closer and more constant obedience than the Mosaic law required,—“For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received its just recompence of reward, how shall *we* escape, if we neglect so great salvation ?” The full argument is : “Moses, with but a little salvation, saved you from earthly bondage, and brought you to an earthly land of life ; Christ, with a great salvation, saves you from soul bondage, and brings you to an eternal land of life ; but, if he who despised the little salvation, and its lax law, (left lax because of the hardness of your hearts,) died without mercy, how shall we escape, if now, with hearts of flesh, we despise so great salvation, refuse the Eternal Land of Promise, and break the stricter and relaxless law of Christian desert-pilgrimage ?” And if these threatenings and promises still remain obscure to us, it is only because we have resolutely refused to obey the orders which were not obscure, and quenched the Spirit which was already given. How far the world around us may be yet beyond our control, only because a curse has been brought upon it by our sloth and infidelity, none of us can tell ; still less may we dare either to praise or accuse our Master, for the state of the creation over which He appointed us kings, and in which we have chosen to live as swine. One thing we know, or may know, if we will,—that the heart and conscience of man are divine ; that in his perception of evil, in his recognition of good, he is himself

a God manifest in the flesh ; that his joy in love, his agony in anger, his indignation at injustice, his glory in self-sacrifice, are all eternal, indisputable proofs of his unity with a great Spiritual Head ; that in these, and not merely in his more availing form, or manifold instinct, he is king over the lower animate world ; that, so far as he denies or forfeits these, he dishonours the Name of his Father, and makes it unholy and unadmirable in the earth ; that so far as he confesses, and rules by, these, he hallows and makes admirable the Name of his Father, and receives, in his sonship, fulness of power with Him, whose are the kingdom, the power, and the glory, world without end.

And now we may go back to our bees' nests, and to our school-benches, in peace ; able to assure our little Agnes, and the like of her, that, whatever hornets and locusts and serpents may have been made for, this at least is true,—that we may set, and are commanded to set, an eternal difference between ourselves and them, by neither carrying daggers at our sides, nor poison in our mouths : and that the choice for us is stern, between being kings over all these creatures, by innocence to which they cannot be exalted, or more weak, miserable and detestable than they, in resolute guilt to which they cannot fall.

Of their instincts, I believe we have rather held too high than too low estimate, because we have not enough recognized or respected our own. We do not differ from the lower creatures by not

possessing instinct, but by possessing will and conscience, to order our innate impulses to the best ends.

The great lines of Pope on this matter, however often quoted fragmentarily, are I think scarcely ever understood in their conclusion.* Let us, for once, read them to their end :—

“ See him, from Nature, rising slow to Art,
To copy instinct then was reason’s part.
Thus then to man the voice of Nature spake ·
Go,—from the creatures thy instructions take,
Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield,
Learn from the beasts the physic of the field,
Thy arts of building from the bee receive,
Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to weave.
Here too all forms of social union find,
And hence let reason, late, instruct mankind.
Here subterranean works and cities see,
There, towns aerial on the waving tree ,
Learn each small people’s genius, policies,
The ants’ republic, and the realm of bees
How those in common all their wealth bestow,
And anarchy without confusion know ;
And these for ever, though a monarch reign,
Their separate cells and properties maintain
Mark what unvaried laws preserve each state—
Laws wise as nature, and as fixed as fate ,
In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw,
Entangle justice in her net of law,
And right, too rigid, harden into wrong—
Still for the strong too weak, the weak, too strong

* I am sensitive for other writers in this point, my own readers being in the almost universal practice of choosing any bit they may happen to fancy in what I say, without ever considering what it was said for.

Yet go, and thus o'er all the creatures sway,
Thus let the wiser make the rest obey,
And for those arts mere instinct could afford
Be crowned as monarchs, or as gods ador'd."

There is a trace, in this last couplet, of the irony, and chastising enforcement of humiliation, which generally characterize the 'Essay on Man'; but, though it takes this colour, the command thus supposed to be uttered by the voice of Nature, is intended to be wholly earnest. "In the arts of which I set you example in the unassisted instinct of lower animals, I assist *you* by the added gifts of will and reason: be therefore, knowingly, in the deeds of Justice, kings under the Lord of Justice, while in the works of your hands, you remain happy labourers under His guidance

Who taught the nations of the field and wood
To shun their poison, and to choose their food,
Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,
Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand."

Nor has ever any great work been accomplished by human creatures, in which instinct was not the principal mental agent, or in which the methods of design could be defined by rule, or apprehended by reason. It is therefore that agency through mechanism destroys the powers of art, and sentiments of religion, together.

And it will be found ultimately by all nations, as it was found long ago by those who have been leaders in human force and intellect, that the initial

virtue of the race consists in the acknowledgment of their own lowly nature and submission to the laws of higher being. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," is the first truth we have to learn of ourselves; and to till the earth out of which we were taken, our first duty: in that labour, and in the relations which it establishes between us and the lower animals, are founded the conditions of our highest faculties and felicities: and without that labour, neither reason, art, nor peace, are possible to man.

But in that labour, accepting bodily death, appointed to us in common with the lower creatures, in noble humility; and kindling day by day the spiritual life, granted to us beyond that of the lower creatures, in noble pride, all wisdom, peace, and unselfish hope and love, may be reached, on earth, as in heaven, and our lives indeed be but a little lessened from those of the angels.

As I am finishing this Fors, I note in the journals accounts of new insect-plague on the vine; and the sunshine on my own hills this morning (7th April), still impure, is yet the first which I have seen spread from the daybreak upon them through all the spring; so dark it has been with blight of storm,—so redolent of disease and distress; of which, and its possible causes, my friends seek as the only wise judgment, that of the journals afore-said. Here, on the other hand, are a few verses *

* Collated out of Sapiencia xv and xvi.

of the traditional wisdom of that king whose political institutions were so total a failure, (according to a supremely sagacious correspondent,) which nevertheless appear to me to reach the roots of these, and of many other hitherto hidden things.

“His heart is ashes, his hope is more vile than earth, and his life of less value than clay.

Forasmuch as he knew not his Maker, and him that inspired into him an active soul, and breathed in him a living spirit.

But they counted our life a pastime, and our time here a market for gain; for, say they, we must be getting every way, though it be by evil means.* Yea, they worshipped those beasts also that are most hateful, (for being compared together, some are worse than others,† neither are they beautiful in respect of beasts,) but they went without the praise of God, and his blessing.

Therefore by the like were they punished worthily, and by the multitude of beasts tormented

And in this thou madest thine enemies confess, that it is thou who deliverest them from all evil.

* Compare Jeremiah ix 6; in the Septuagint, *τόκος ἐπὶ τόκῳ, καὶ δόλος ἐπὶ δόλῳ*: “usury on usury, and trick upon trick.”

† The instinct for the study of parasites, modes of disease, the lower forms of undeveloped creatures, and the instinctive processes of digestion and generation, rather than the varied and noble habit of life,—which shows itself so grotesquely in modern science, is the precise counterpart of the forms of idolatry (as of beetle and serpent, rather than of clean or innocent creatures,) which were in great part the cause of final corruption in ancient mythology and morals.

But thy sons not the very teeth of venomous dragons overcame : for thy mercy was ever by them, and healed them.

For thou hast power of life and death : thou ledest to the gates of hell, and bringest up again.

For the ungodly, that denied to know thee, were scourged by the strength of thine arm : with strange rains, hails, and showers, were they persecuted, that they could not avoid, for through fire were they consumed.

Instead whereof thou feddest thine own people with angels' food, and didst send them, from heaven, bread prepared without their labour, able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste.

For thy sustenance declared thy sweetness unto thy children, and serving to the appetite of the eater, tempered itself to every man's liking.

For the creature that serveth thee, who art the Maker, increaseth his strength against the unrighteous for their punishment, and abateth his strength for the benefit of such as put their trust in thee.

Therefore even then was it altered into all fashions, and was obedient to thy grace, that nourisheth all things, according to the desire of them that had need :

That thy children, O Lord, whom thou lovest, might know that it is not the growing of fruits that nourisheth man : but that it is thy word, which preserveth them that put their trust in thee.

For that which was not destroyed of the fire, being warmed with a little sunbeam, soon melted away :

That it might be known, that we must prevent the sun to give thee thanks, and at the dayspring pray unto thee."

LETTER LIV

PLAITED THORNS

BEFORE going on with my own story to-day, I must fasten down a main principle about doing good work, not yet enough made clear.

It has been a prevalent notion in the minds of well-disposed persons, that if they acted according to their own conscience, they must, therefore, be doing right.

But they assume, in feeling or asserting this, either that there is no Law of God, or that it cannot be known ; but only felt, or conjectured.

"I must do what *I* think right." How often is this sentence uttered and acted on—bravely—nobly—innocently ; but always—because of its egotism—erringly. You must not do what *YOU* think right, but, whether you or anybody think, or don't think it, what *is* right.

"I must act according to the dictates of my conscience."

By no means, my conscientious friend, unless you are quite sure that yours is not the conscience of an ass.

"I am doing my best—what can man do more?"

You might be doing much less, and yet much better:—perhaps you are doing your best in producing, or doing, an eternally bad thing.

All these three sayings, and the convictions they express, are wise only in the mouths and minds of wise men; they are deadly, and all the deadlier because bearing an image and superscription of virtue, in the mouths and minds of fools.

“But there is every gradation, surely, between wisdom and folly?”

No. The fool, whatever his wit, is the man who doesn't know his master—who has said in his heart—there is no God—no Law.

The wise man knows his master. Less or more wise, he perceives lower or higher masters; but always some creature larger than himself—some law holier than his own. A law to be sought—learned, loved—obeyed; but in order to its discovery, the obedience must be begun first, to the best one knows. Obey *something*; and you will have a chance some day of finding out what is best to obey. But if you begin by obeying nothing, you will end by obeying Beelzebub and all his seven invited friends.

Which being premised, I venture to continue the history of my own early submissions to external Force.

The Bible readings, described in my last letter, took place always in the front parlour of the house, which, when I was about five years old, my father found himself able to buy the lease of, at Herne

Hill. The piece of road between the Fox tavern and the Herne Hill station, remains, in all essential points of character, unchanged to this day: certain Gothic splendours, lately indulged in by our wealthier neighbours, being the only serious innovations; and these are so graciously concealed by the fine trees of their grounds, that the passing viator remains unappalled by them; and I can still walk up and down the piece of road aforesaid, imagining myself seven years old.

Our house was the fourth part of a group which stand accurately on the top or dome of the hill, where the ground is for a small space level, as the snows are (I understand) on the dome of Mont Blanc; presently falling, however, in what may be, in the London clay formation, considered a precipitous slope, to our valley of Chamouni (or of Dulwich) on the east; and with a softer descent into Cold Arbour (nautically aspirated into Harbour)-lane on the west: on the south, no less beautifully declining to the dale of the Effra, (doubtless shortened from Effrena, signifying the "Unbridled" river; recently, I regret to say, bricked over for the convenience of Mr. Biffin, the chemist, and others); while on the north, prolonged indeed with slight depression some half mile or so, and receiving, in the parish of Lambeth, the chivalric title of 'Champion Hill,' it plunges down at last to efface itself in the plains of Peckham, and the rustic solitudes of Goose Green.

The group, of which our house was the quarter,

consisted of two precisely similar partner-couples of houses,—gardens and all to match ; still the two highest blocks of buildings seen from Norwood on the crest of the ridge ; which, even within the time I remember, rose with no stinted beauty of wood and lawn above the Dulwich fields.

The house itself, three-storied, with garrets above, commanded, in those comparatively smokeless days, a very notable view from its upper windows, of the Norwood hills on one side, and the winter sunrise over them ; and of the valley of the Thames, with Windsor in the distance, on the other, and the summer sunset over these. It had front and back garden in sufficient proportion to its size ; the front, richly set with old evergreens, and well grown lilac and laburnum ; the back, seventy yards long by twenty wide, renowned over all the hill for its pears and apples, which had been chosen with extreme care by our predecessor, (shame on me to forget the name of a man to whom I owe so much !)—and possessing also a strong old mulberry tree, a tall white-heart cherry tree, a black Kentish one, and an almost unbroken hedge, all round, of alternate gooseberry and currant bush ; decked, in due season, (for the ground was wholly beneficent,) with magical splendour of abundant fruit : fresh green, soft amber, and rough-bristled crimson bending the spinous branches ; clustered pearl and pendent ruby joyfully discoverable under the large leaves that looked like vine.

The differences of primal importance which I

observed between the nature of this garden, and that of Eden, as I had imagined it, were, that, in this one, *all* the fruit was forbidden; and there were no companionable beasts: in other respects the little domain answered every purpose of Paradise to me; and the climate, in that cycle of our years, allowed me to pass most of my life in it. My mother never gave me more to learn than she knew I could easily get learnt, if I set myself honestly to work, by twelve o'clock. She never allowed anything to disturb me when my task was set; if it was not said rightly by twelve o'clock, I was kept in till I knew it, and in general, even when Latin Grammar came to supplement the Psalms, I was my own master for at least an hour before dinner at half-past one, and for the rest of the afternoon. My mother, herself finding her chief personal pleasure in her flowers, was often planting or pruning beside me,—at least if I chose to stay beside *her*. I never thought of doing anything behind her back which I would not have done before her face; and her presence was therefore no restraint to me; but, also, no particular pleasure; for, from having always been left so much alone, I had generally my own little affairs to see after; and on the whole, by the time I was seven years old, was already getting too independent, mentally, even of my father and mother; and having nobody else to be dependent upon, began to lead a very small, perky, contented, conceited, Cock-Robinson-Crusoe sort of life, in the central point which

it appeared to me, (as it must naturally appear to geometrical animals) that I occupied in the universe.

This was partly the fault of my father's modesty; and partly of his pride. He had so much more confidence in my mother's judgment as to such matters than in his own, that he never ventured even to help, much less to cross her, in the conduct of my education; on the other hand, in the fixed purpose of making an ecclesiastical gentleman of me, with the superfinest of manners, and access to the highest circles of fleshly and spiritual society, the visits to Croydon, where I entirely loved my aunt, and young baker-cousins, became rarer and more rare: the society of our neighbours on the hill could not be had without breaking up our regular and sweetly selfish manner of living; and on the whole, I had nothing animate to care for, in a childish way, but myself, some nests of ants, which the gardener would never leave undisturbed for me, and a sociable bird or two; though I never had the sense or perseverance to make one really tame. But that was partly because, if ever I managed to bring one to be the least trustful of me, the cats got it.

Under these favourable circumstances, what powers of imagination I possessed, either fastened themselves on inanimate things—the sky, the leaves, and pebbles, observable within the walls of Eden, or caught at any opportunity of flight into regions of romance, compatible with the objective realities

of existence in the nineteenth century, within a mile and a quarter of Camberwell Green.

Herein my father, happily, though with no definite intention other than of pleasing me, when he found he could do so without infringing any of my mother's rules, became my guide. I was particularly fond of watching him shave; and was always allowed to come into his room in the morning (under the one in which I am now writing), to be the motionless witness of that operation. Over his dressing-table hung one of his own water-colour drawings, made under the teaching of the elder Nasmyth: (I believe, at the High School of Edinburgh.) It was done in the early manner of tinting, which, just about the time when my father was at the High School, Dr. Munro was teaching Turner; namely, in grey under-tints of Prussian blue and British ink, washed with warm colour afterwards on the lights. It represented Conway Castle, with its Frith, and, in the foreground, a cottage, a fisherman, and a boat at the water's edge.

When my father had finished shaving, he always told me a story about this picture. The custom began without any initial purpose of his, in consequence of my troublesome curiosity whether the fisherman lived in the cottage, and where he was going to in the boat. It being settled, for peace' sake, that he *did* live in the cottage, and was going in the boat to fish near the castle, the plot of the drama afterwards gradually thickened; and became, I believe, involved with that of the tragedy of

"Douglas," and of the "Castle Spectre," in both of which pieces my father had performed in private theatricals, before my mother, and a select Edinburgh audience, when he was a boy of sixteen, and she, at grave twenty, a model housekeeper, and very scornful and religiously suspicious of theatricals. But she was never weary of telling me, in later years, how beautiful my father looked in his Highland dress, with the high black feathers.

I remember nothing of the story he used to tell me, now; but I have the picture still, and hope to leave it finally in the Oxford schools, where, if I can complete my series of illustrative work for general reference, it will be of some little use as an example of an old-fashioned method of water-colour drawing not without its advantages; and, at the same time, of the dangers incidental in it to young students, of making their castles too yellow, and their fishermen too blue.

In the afternoons, when my father returned (always punctually) from his business, he dined, at half-past four, in the front parlour, my mother sitting beside him to hear the events of the day, and give counsel and encouragement with respect to the same;—chiefly the last, for my father was apt to be vexed if orders for sherry fell the least short of their due standard, even for a day or two. I was never present at this time, however, and only avouch what I relate by hearsay and probable conjecture; for between four and six it would have been a grave misdemeanour in me if I so much as

approached the parlour door. After that, in summer time, we were all in the garden as long as the day lasted; tea under the white-heart cherry tree; or in winter and rough weather, at six o'clock in the drawing-room,—I having my cup of milk, and slice of bread-and-butter, in a little recess, with a table in front of it, wholly sacred to me; and in which I remained in the evenings as an Idol in a niche, while my mother knitted, and my father read to her, —and to me, so far as I chose to listen.

The series of the Waverley novels, then drawing towards its close, was still the chief source of delight in all households caring for literature; and I can no more recollect the time when I did not know them than when I did not know the Bible; but I have still a vivid remembrance of my father's intense expression of sorrow mixed with scorn, as he threw down 'Count Robert of Paris,' after reading three or four pages; and knew that the life of Scott was ended: the scorn being a very complex and bitter feeling in him,—partly, indeed, of the book itself, but chiefly of the wretches who were tormenting and selling the wrecked intellect, and not a little, deep down, of the subtle dishonesty which had essentially caused the ruin. My father never could forgive Scott his concealment of the Ballantyne partnership.

I permit myself, without check, to enlarge on these trivial circumstances of my early days, partly because I know that there are one or two people in the world who will like to hear of them; but chiefly

because I can better assure the general reader of some results of education on after life, by one example in which I know all my facts, than by many, in which every here and there a link might be wanting.

And it is perhaps already time to mark what advantage and mischief, by the changes of life up to seven years old, had been irrevocably determined for me.

I will first count my blessings (as a not unwise friend once recommended me to do, continually ; whereas I have a bad trick of always numbering the thorns in my fingers, and not the bones in them).

And for best and truest beginning of all blessings, I had been taught the perfect meaning of Peace, in thought, act, and word.

I never had heard my father's or mother's voice once raised in any question with each other ; nor seen an angry, or even slightly hurt or offended, glance in the eyes of either. I had never heard a servant scolded, nor even suddenly, passionately, or in any severe manner, blamed. I had never seen a moment's trouble or disorder in any household matter ; nor anything whatever either done in a hurry, or undone in due time. I had no conception of such a feeling as anxiety ; my father's occasional vexation in the afternoons, when he had only got an order for twelve butts after expecting one for fifteen, as I have just stated, was never manifested to *me* ; and itself related only to the question whether his name would be a step higher or lower

in the year's list of sherry exporters ; for he never spent more than half his income, and therefore found himself little incommoded by occasional variations in the total of it. I had never done any wrong that I knew of—beyond occasionally delaying the commitment to heart of some improving sentence, that I might watch a wasp on the window pane, or a bird in the cherry tree ; and I had never seen any grief.

Next to this quite priceless gift of Peace, I had received the perfect understanding of the natures of Obedience and Faith. I obeyed word, or lifted finger, of father or mother, simply as a ship her helm ; not only without idea of resistance, but receiving the direction as a part of my own life and force, and helpful law, as necessary to me in every moral action as the law of gravity in leaping. And my practice in Faith was soon complete : nothing was ever promised me that was not given ; nothing ever threatened me that was not inflicted, and nothing ever told me that was not true.

Peace, obedience, faith ; these three for chief good ; next to these, the habit of fixed attention with both eyes and mind—on which I will not farther enlarge at this moment, this being the main practical faculty of my life, causing Mazzini to say of me, in conversation authentically reported, a year or two before his death, that I had “the most analytic mind in Europe.” An opinion in which, so far as I am acquainted with Europe, I am myself entirely disposed to concur.

Lastly, an extreme perfection in palate and all other bodily senses, given by the utter prohibition of cake, wine, comfits, or, except in carefullest restriction, fruit; and by fine preparation of what food was given me. Such I esteem the main blessings of my childhood;—next, let me count the equally dominant calamities.

First, that I had nothing to love.

My parents were—in a sort—visible powers of nature to me, no more loved than the sun and the moon: only I should have been annoyed and puzzled if either of them had gone out; (how much, now, when both are darkened!)—still less did I love God; not that I had any quarrel with Him, or fear of Him; but simply found what people told me was His service, disagreeable; and what people told me was His book, not entertaining. I had no companions to quarrel with, neither; nobody to assist, and nobody to thank. Not a servant was ever allowed to do anything for me, but what it was their duty to do; and why should I have been grateful to the cook for cooking, or the gardener for gardening, —when the one dared not give me a baked potato without asking leave, and the other would not let my ants' nest alone, because they made the walks untidy? The evil consequence of all this was not, however, what might perhaps have been expected, that I grew up selfish or unaffectionate; but that, when affection did come, it came with violence utterly rampant and unmanageable, at least by me, who never before had anything to manage.

For (second of chief calamities) I had nothing to endure. Danger or pain of any kind I knew not: my strength was never exercised, my patience never tried, and my courage never fortified. Not that I was ever afraid of anything,—either ghosts, thunder, or beasts; and one of the nearest approaches to insubordination which I was ever tempted into as a child, was in passionate effort to get leave to play with the lion's cubs in Wombwell's menagerie.

Thirdly. I was taught no precision nor etiquette of manners; it was enough if, in the little society we saw, I remained unobtrusive, and replied to a question without shyness: but the shyness came later, and increased as I grew conscious of the rudeness arising from the want of social discipline, and found it impossible to acquire, in advanced life, dexterity in any bodily exercise, skill in any pleasing accomplishment, or ease and tact in ordinary behaviour.

Lastly, and chief of evils. My judgment of right and wrong, and powers of independent action,* were left entirely undeveloped; because the bridle and blinkers were never taken off me. Children should have their times of being off duty, like soldiers; and when once the obedience, if required, is certain, the little creature should be very early put for periods of practice in complete command of itself; set on the barebacked horse of its own will, and left to

* *Action*, observe, I say here; in *thought* I was too independent, as I said above.

break it by its own strength. But the ceaseless authority exercised over my youth left me, when cast out at last into the world, unable for some time to do more than drift with its elements. My present courses of life are indeed not altogether of that compliant nature; but are, perhaps, more unaccommodating than they need be, in the insolence of reaction; and the result upon me, of the elements and the courses together, is, in sum, that at my present age of fifty-six, while I have indeed the sincerest admiration for the characters of Phocion, Cincinnatus, and Caractacus, and am minded, so far as I may, to follow the example of those worthy personages, my own private little fancy, in which, for never having indulged me, I am always quarrelling with my Fortune, is still, as it always was, to find Prince Ahmed's arrow, and marry the Fairy Paribanou.

My present verdict, therefore, on the general tenor of my education at that time, must be, that it was at once too formal and too luxurious; leaving my character, at the most important moment for its construction, cramped indeed, but not disciplined; and only by protection innocent, instead of by practice virtuous. My mother saw this herself, and but too clearly, in later years; and whenever I did anything wrong, stupid, or hard-hearted,—(and I have done many things that were all three),—always said, 'It is because you were too much indulged.'

So strongly do I feel this, as I sip my coffee this morning, (May 24th,) after being made profoundly miserable last night, because I did not think it likely

I should be accepted if I made an offer to any one of three beautiful young ladies who were crushing and rending my heart into a mere shamrock leaf, the whole afternoon; nor had any power to do, what I should have liked better still, send Giafar (without Zobeide's knowing anything about it) to superintend the immediate transport to my palace of all three;—that I am afraid, if it were left to me at present to institute, without help from kinder counsellors, the education of the younger children on St. George's estate, the methods of the old woman who lived in a shoe would be the first that occurred to me as likely to conduce most directly to their future worth and felicity.

And I chanced, as Fors would have it, to fall, but last week, as I was arranging some books bought two years ago, and forgotten ever since,—on an instance of the use of extreme severity in education, which cannot but commend itself to the acceptance of every well informed English gentlewoman. For all well informed English gentlewomen and gentlemaidens, have faithful respect for the memory of Lady Jane Grey.

But I never myself, until the minute when I opened that book, could at all understand Lady Jane Grey. I have seen a great deal, thank Heaven, of good, and prudent, and clever girls; but not among the very best and wisest of them did I ever find the slightest inclination to stop indoors to read Plato, when all their people were in the Park. On the contrary, if any approach to

such disposition manifested itself, I found it was always, either because the scholastic young person thought that somebody might possibly call, suppose—myself, the Roger Ascham of her time,—or suppose somebody else who would prevent her, that day, from reading “*piu avanti*,” or because the author who engaged her attention, so far from being Plato himself, was, in many essential particulars, anti-Platonic. And the more I thought of Lady Jane Grey, the more she puzzled me.

Wherefore, opening, among my unexamined books, Roger Ascham's Scholemaster, printed by John Daye, dwelling over Aldersgate, An. 1571, just at the page where he gives the original account of the thing as it happened, I stopped in my unpacking to decipher the black letter of it with attention; which, by your leave, good reader, you shall also take the trouble to do yourself, from this, as far as I can manage to give it you, accurate facsimile of the old page. And trust me that I have a reason for practising you in these old letters, though I have no time to tell it you just now.

“And one example, whether love or feare doth worke more in a childe for vertue and learning, I will gladly report: which may bee heard with some pleasure, i followed with more profite. Before I went into Germanie I came to Brodegate in Leicestershire, to take my leabe of that noble Lady Jane Grey, to whom I was exceeding much beholding. Her parentes, the Duke and the Dutchesse, with all the householde, Gentlemen and Gentlewomen,

III. II

were hunting in the Parke: I found her in her chamber, reading Phædon Platonis in Greeke, i that with as much delite, as some gentleman would read a mery tale in Bocace. After salutation, and duetie done, with some other talk, I asked her, why shee would leese such pastime in the Parke? Smiling shee answered mee: I wisse, all their sport in the Parke, is but a shadow to that pleasure y I finde in Plato: Alas, good folke, they never felt what true pleasure ment."

Thus far, except in the trouble of reading black letters, I have given you nothing new, or even freshly old. All this we have heard of the young lady a hundred times over. But next to this, comes something which I fancy will be unexpected by most of my readers. For the fashion of all literary students, catering for the public, has hitherto been to pick out of their author whatever bits they thought likely to be acceptable to Demos, and to keep everything of suspicious taste out of his dish of hashed hare. Nay, 'he pares his apple that will cleanly eat,' says honest George Herbert. I am not wholly sure, however, even of that; if the apple itself be clean off the bough, and the teeth of little Eve and Adam, what teeth should be, it is quite questionable whether the good old fashion of alternate bite be not the method of finest enjoyment of flavour. But the modern frugivorous public will soon have a steam-machine in Covent Garden, to pick the straw out of their strawberries.

In accordance with which popular principle of

natural selection, the historians of Lady Jane's life, finding this first opening of the scene at Brodegate so entirely charming and graceful, and virtuous, and moral, and ducal, and large-landed-estate-ish—without there being the slightest suggestion in it of any principle, to which anybody could possibly object,—pounce upon it as a flawless gem; and clearing from it all the objectional matrix, with delicate skill, set it forth—changed about from one to another of the finest cases of velvet eloquence to be got up for money—in the corner shop—London and Ryder's, of the Bond Street of Vanity Fair.

But I, as an old mineralogist, like to see my gems in the rock; and always bring away the biggest piece I can break with the heaviest hammer I can carry. Accordingly, I venture to beg of you also, good reader, to decipher farther this piece of kindly Ascham's following narration:

“And how came you, Madame, quoth I, to this deepe knowledge of pleasure, t what did cheefly allure you unto it, seing not many women, but very fewe men have attaigned thereunto. I will tell you, quoth shee, and tell you a troth, which perchance ye shall marvel at. One of the greatest benefites that ever God gave me, is, that hee sent me so sharpe and severe parentes, and so gentle a schoolemaster. For whē I am in presence either of father or mother, whether I speake, keepe silence, sit, stand, or go, eate, drinke, be merry, or sad, bee singing, playing, dancing, or doing anything els, I must doe it, as it were, in such weight, measure, t number, even so

perfectly, as God made the world, or els I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatned, yea, presently sometimes, with pinches, nippes, and hobbess, and other wayes which I will not name for the honor I beare thē, so without measure misordered, that I thinke my selfe in hell, till time come that I must goe to M. Elmer who teacheth mee so gently, so pleasantly, with such faire alluremētes to learning that I thinke all the time nothing, whyles I am with him. And when I am called frō him, I fall on weeping, because, whatsoeber I doe els but learning, is full of greefe, trouble, feare, and whole misliking unto mee. And thus my booke hath been so much my pleasure, t̄ bringeth daily to me more pleasure t̄ more, h̄ in respect of it, all other pleasures, in very deede, bee but trifles t̄ troubles unto mee.

Lady Jane ceases, Ascham speaks : I remēber this talke gladly, bothe because it is so worthy of memory t̄ because also it was the last talke that ever I had, and the last time, that ever I saw that noble t̄ worthy Lady."

Now, for the clear understanding of this passage, —I adjure you, gentle reader, (if you are such, and therefore capable of receiving adjuration)—in the name of St. George and all saints,—of Edward III. and all knights,—of Alice of Salisbury and all stainless wives, and of Jeanne of France and all stainless maids, that ~~you~~ put at once out of your mind, under penalty of sharpest Honte Ban, all such thought as would first suggest itself to the modern novel writer, and novel reader, concerning this matter,—namely,

that the young girl is in love with her tutor. She loves him rightly, as all good and noble boys and girls necessarily love good masters,—and no otherwise;—is grateful to him rightly, and no otherwise;—happy with him and her book—rightly, and no otherwise.

And that her father and mother, with whatever leaven of human selfishness, or impetuous disgrace in the manner and violence of their dealing with her, did, nevertheless, compel their child to do all things that she did,—rightly, and no otherwise, was, verily, though at that age she knew it but in part,—the literally crowning and guiding Mercy of her life,—the plaited thorn upon the brow, and rooted thorn around the feet, which are the tribute of Earth to the Princesses of Heaven.

LETTER LV

THE WOODS OF MURI

NO more letters, at present, reaching me, from clergymen, I use the breathing-time permitted me, to express more clearly the meaning of my charge,—left in its brevity obscure,—that, as a body, they “teach a false gospel for hire.”

It is obscure, because associating two charges quite distinct. The first, that, whether for hire or not, they preach a false gospel. The second, that, whether they preach truth or falsehood, they preach as hirelings.

The three clergymen who have successively corresponded with me have every one, for their own part, eagerly repudiated the doctrine of the Eleventh Article of the Church of England. Nevertheless, the substance of that article assuredly defines the method of salvation commonly announced at this day from British pulpits; and the effect of this supremely pleasant and supremely false gospel, on the British mind, may be best illustrated by the reply, made only the other day, by a dishonest, but sincerely religious, commercial gentleman, to an acquaintance of mine, who had expressed surprise

that he should come to church after doing the things he was well known to do: "Ah, my friend, my standard is just the publican's."

In the second place, while it is unquestionably true that many clergymen are doing what one complacently points out their ability to do,—sacrificing, to wit, themselves, their souls, and bodies, (not that I clearly understand what a clergyman means by sacrificing his soul,) without any thought of temporal reward; this preaching of Christ has, nevertheless, become an acknowledged Profession, and means of livelihood for gentlemen: and the Simony of to-day differs only from that of apostolic times, in that, while the elder Simon thought the gift of the Holy Ghost worth a considerable offer in ready money, the modern Simon would on the whole refuse to accept the same gift of the Third Person of the Trinity, without a nice little attached income, a pretty church, with a steeple restored by Mr. Scott, and an eligible neighbourhood.

These are the two main branches of the charge I meant to gather into my short sentence; and to these I now further add, that in defence of this Profession, with its pride, privilege, and more or less roseate repose of domestic felicity, extremely beautiful and enviable in country parishes, the clergy, as a body, have, with what energy and power was in them, repelled the advance both of science and scholarship, so far as either interfered with what they had been accustomed to teach; and connived at every abuse in public and private conduct, with

which they felt it would be considered uncivil, and feared it might ultimately prove unsafe, to interfere.

And that, therefore, seeing that they were put in charge to preach the Gospel of Christ, and have preached a false gospel instead of it; and seeing that they were put in charge to enforce the Law of Christ, and have permitted license instead of it, they are answerable, as no other men are answerable, for the existing "state of things" in this British nation, —a state now recorded in its courts of justice as productive of crimes respecting which the Birmingham Defender of the Faith himself declares that "in the records of no age or nation will any tales be found surpassing these in savagery of mind and body, and in foulness of heart and soul."

Answerable, as no other men are, I repeat; and entirely disdain my correspondent's attempt to involve me, or any other layman, in his responsibility. He has taken on himself the office of teacher. Mine is a painter's; and I am plagued to death by having to teach *instead* of him, and his brethren,—silent, they, for fear of their congregations! Which of them, from least to greatest, dares, for instance, so much as to tell the truth to women about their dress? Which of them has forbidden his feminine audience to wear fine bonnets in church? Do they think the dainty garlands are wreathed round the studiously dressed hair, because a woman "should have power on her head because of the angels"? Which of them understands that text? —which of them enforces it? Dares the boldest

ritualist order his women-congregation to come all with white napkins over their heads, rich and poor alike, and have done with their bonnets? What, 'You cannot order'? You could say you wouldn't preach if you saw one bonnet in the church, couldn't you? 'But everybody would say you were mad.' Of course they would—and that the devil was in you. "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of His household?" but now that 'all men speak well of you,' think you the Son of Man will speak the same?

And you, and especially your wives, (as is likely!) are very angry with me, I hear, on all hands;—and think me hostile to you. As well might a carter asleep on his shafts accuse me of being his enemy for trying to wake him; or his master's enemy, because I would fain not see the cart in the ditch.

* * * * *

"The old cart went again as well as ever; and 'he could never have believed,' said Hansli, 'that a cart could have taken itself up so, and become so extremely changed for the better. That might be an example to many living creatures.'

More than one young girl, however, in her own secret heart, reproached Hansli for his choice—saying to herself that she would have done for him quite as well. 'If she had thought he had been in such a hurry, she could have gone well enough, too, to put herself on his road, and prevented him from looking at that rubbishy rag of a girl. She never could have thought Hansli was

such a goose,—he, who might easily have married quite differently, if he had had the sense to choose. As sure as the carnival was coming, he would repent before he got to it. All the worse for *him*—it's his own fault: as one makes one's^{*} bed, one lies in it.'

But Hansli had not been a goose at all, and never found anything to repent of. He had a little wife who was just the very thing he wanted,—a little, modest, busy wife, who made him as happy as if he had married Heaven itself in person.

It is true that she didn't long help Hansli to pull the cart: he soon found himself obliged to go in the shafts alone again; but, aussi, once he saw he had a mustard,* he consoled himself. 'What a fellow!' said he, examining him 'In a wink, he'll be big enough to help me himself.' And, thereupon, away he went with his cart, all alone, without finding any difference.

It is true that in a very little while his wife wanted to come again to help him. 'If only we make a little haste to get back,' said she, 'the little one can wait well enough—besides that the grandmother can give him something to drink while we are away.' But the mustard himself was not of their mind, and soon made them walk in his own fashion. They made all the haste they could to get home—but before they were within half a league

* Moutard—not -arde; but I can't give better than this English for it.

of their door, the wife cried out, 'Mercy! what's that?' 'That' was a shrill crying like a little pig's when it is being killed. 'Mercy on us, what is it,—what's the matter!' cried she; and left the cart, and ran off at full speed: and there, sure enough, was the grandmother, whom the little thing's cries had put into a dreadful fright lest it should have convulsions, and who could think of nothing better than to bring it to meet mamma. The heavy boy, the fright, and the run, had put the old woman so out of breath that it was really high time for somebody to take the child. She was almost beside herself; and it was ever so long before she could say, 'No—I won't have him alone any more: in my life I never saw such a little wretch: I had rather come and draw the cart.'

These worthy people thus learned what it is to have a tyrant in one's house, little one though he be. But all that didn't interrupt their household ways. The little wife found plenty to do staying at home; gardening, and helping to make the brooms. Without ever hurrying anything, she worked without ceasing, and was never tired,—so easily things ran under her hand. Hansli was all surprise to find he got along so well with a wife; and to find his purse growing fatter so fast. He leased a little field; and the grandmother saw a goat in it; presently two. He would not hear of a donkey, but arranged with the miller, when he went to the town, to carry some of his brooms for him; which, it is true, skimmed off a little of the profit, and that vexed Hansli, who

could not bear the smallest kreutzer to escape him. But his life soon became quite simple and continuous. The days followed each other like the waves of a river, without much difference between one and another. Every year grew new twigs to make brooms with. Every year, also, without putting herself much about, his wife gave him a new baby. She brought it, and planted it there. Every day it cried a little,—every day it grew a little; and, in a turn of the hand, it was of use for something. The grandmother said that, old as she was, she had never seen anything like it. It was, for all the world, she said, like the little cats, which at six weeks old, catch mice. And all these children were really like so many blessings—the more there came, the more money one made. Very soon—only think of it—the grandmother saw a cow arrive. If she had not with her own eyes seen Hansli pay for it, it would have been almost impossible to make her believe that he had not stolen it. If the poor old woman had lived two years more,* she would even have seen Hansli become himself the owner of the little cottage in which she had lived so long, with forest right which gave him more wood than he wanted; and ground enough to keep a cow and two sheep,

* Fate, and the good novelist, thus dismiss poor grandmamma in a passing sentence,—just when we wanted her so much to live a little longer, too! But that is Fors's way, and Gotthelf knows it. A bad novelist would have made her live to exactly the proper moment, and then die in a most instructive manner, and with pathetic incidents and speeches which would have filled a chapter.

which are convenient things enough, when one has children who wear worsted stockings.

(Upon all that,* Hansli certainly owed a good deal, but it was well-placed money, and no one would ask him for it, as long as he paid the interest to the day; for the rest, 'if God lent him life, these debts did not trouble him,' said he.) He might then learn that the first kreutzers are the most difficult to save. There's always a hole they are running out at, or a mouth to swallow them. But when once one has got to the point of having no more debts, and is completely set on one's legs, then things begin to go!—the very ground seems to grow under your feet,—everything profits more and more,—the rivulet becomes a river, and the gains become always easier and larger: on one condition, nevertheless, that one shall change nothing in one's way of life. For it is just then that new needs spring out of the ground like mushrooms on a dunghill, if not for the husband, at least for the wife,—if not for the parents, at least for the children. A thousand things seem to become necessary of which we had never thought; and we are ashamed of ever so many others, which till then had not given us the smallest concern; and we exaggerate the value of what we have, because once we had nothing; and our own value, because we attribute our success to ourselves,—and,—one changes one's way of life,

* This paragraph implies, of course, the existence of all modern abuses,—the story dealing only with the world as it is.

and expenses increase, and labour lessens, and the haughty spirit goes before the fall.

It was not so with Hansli. He continued to live and work just the same; and hardly ever spent anything at the inn; aussi, he rejoiced all the more to find something hot ready for him when he came home; and did honour to it. Nothing was changed in him, unless that his strength for work became always greater, little by little; and his wife had the difficult art of making the children serve themselves, each, according to its age,—not with many words neither; and she herself scarcely knew how.

A pedagogue would never have been able to get the least explanation of it from her. Those children took care of each other, helped their father to make his brooms, and their mother in her work about the house; none of them had the least idea of the pleasures of doing nothing, nor of dreaming or lounging about; and yet not one was overworked, or neglected. They shot up like willows by a brookside, full of vigour and gaiety. The parents had no time for idling with them, but the children none the less knew their love, and saw how pleased they were when their little ones did their work well. Their parents prayed with them: on Sundays the father read them a chapter which he explained afterwards as well as he could, and on account of that also the children were full of respect for him, considering him as the father of the family who talks with God Himself (and who will tell Him

when children disobey *). The degree of respect felt by children for their parents depends always on the manner in which the parents bear themselves to God. Why do not all parents reflect more on this ? †

Nor was our Hansli held in small esteem by other people, any more than by his children. He was so decided and so sure ; words full of good sense were plenty with him ; honourable in everything, he never set himself up for rich, nor complained of being poor ; so that many a pretty lady would come expressly into the kitchen, when she heard that the broom-merchant was there, to inform herself how things went in the country, and how such and such a matter was turning out. Nay, in many of the houses he was trusted to lay in their winter provisions, a business which brought him many a bright batz. The Syndic's wife at Thun, herself, often had a chat with him ; it had become, so to speak, really a pressing need with her to see him at Thun every Saturday ; and when she was talking to him, it had happened, not once nor twice, that M. the Syndic himself had been obliged to wait for an answer to something he had asked his wife. After all, a Syndic's wife may surely give herself leave to talk a little according to her own fancy, once a week.

* A minute Evangelical fragment—dubitable enough.

† Primarily, because it is untrue. The respect of a child for its parent depends on the parent's own personal character ; and not at all, irrespective of that, on his religious behaviour. Which the practical good sense of the reverend novelist presently admits.

One fine day, however, it was the Saturday at Thun, and there was not in all the town a shadow of the broom-merchant. Thence, aussi, great emotion, and grave faces. More than one maid was on the doorsteps, with her arms akimbo, leaving quietly upstairs in the kitchen the soup and the meat to agree with each other as best they might.

'You haven't seen him then?—have you heard nothing of him?'—asked they, one of the other. More than one lady ran into her kitchen, prepared to dress* her servant well, from head to foot, because she hadn't been told when the broom-merchant was there. But she found no servant there, and only the broth boiling over. Madame the Syndic herself got disturbed; and interrogated, first her husband, and then the gendarme. And as they knew nothing, neither the one nor the other, down she went into the low town herself, in person, to inquire after her broom-merchant. She was quite out of brooms—and the year's house-cleaning was to be done next week—and now no broom-merchant—*je vous demande!*† And truly enough, no broom-merchant appeared; and during all the week there was a feeling of want in the town, and an enormous disquietude the next Saturday. Will he come? Won't he come? He came, in effect; and if he had tried to answer all the questions put to him, would not have got away again till the next week.

* We keep the metaphor in the phrase, to 'give a dressing,' but the short verb is better.

† Untranslatable.

He contented himself with saying to everybody that 'he had been obliged to go to the funeral.'

'Whose funeral?' asked Madame the Syndic, from whom he could not escape so easily

'My sister's,' answered the broom-merchant.

'Who was she? and when did they bury her?' Madame continued to ask.

The broom-merchant answered briefly, but frankly: aussi Madame the Syndic cried out all at once,

'Mercy on us!—are you the brother of that servant-girl there's been such a noise about, who turned out at her master's death to have been his wife,—and had all his fortune left to her, and died herself soon afterwards?'

'It is precisely so,' answered Hansli, dryly.*

'But—goodness of Heaven!' cried Madame the Syndic, 'you inherit fifty thousand crowns at least,—and behold you still running over the country with your brooms!'

'Why not?' said Hansli; 'I haven't got that money, yet; and I'm not going to let go my sparrow in the hand for a pigeon on the tiles.'

'Pigeon on the tiles, indeed!' said Madame,—
'why, we were speaking of it only this morning—'

* It was unworthy of Gotthelf to spoil his story by this vulgar theatrical catastrophe; and his object (namely, to exhibit the character of Hansli in riches as well as poverty,) does not justify him; for, to be an example to those in his own position, Hansli should have remained in it. We will, however, take what good we can get; several of the points for the sake of which I have translated the whole story, are in this part of it.

I and M. the Syndic ; and he said the thing was perfectly sure, and the money came all to the brother.'

'Ah, well, my faith, so much the better,' said Hansli ; 'but about what I called to ask,—must you have the brooms in eight days, or fifteen ?'

'Ah, bah—you and your brooms !' cried Madame the Syndic ; 'come in, will you ?—I want to see how wide Monsieur will open his eyes !'

'But, Madame, I am a little hurried to-day ; it's a long way home from here, and the days are short.'

'Long or short, come in, always,' said Madame imperatively,—and Hansli had nothing for it but to obey.

She did not take him into the kitchen, but into the dining-room ; sent her maid to tell Monsieur that Hansli was there,—ordered up a bottle of wine,—and forced Hansli to sit down, in spite of his continued protesting that he had no time, and that the days were short. But in a wink the Monsieur was there, sat down at the table also, and drank to Hansli's health and happiness ; requiring him at the same time to explain how that had all happened.

'Ah, well, I'll tell you in two words,—it is not long. As soon as she had been confirmed, my sister went into the world to look for work. She got on from place to place, and was much valued, it seems. As for us at home, she occupied herself little about us : only came to see us twice, in all the time ; and, since my mother died, not at all. I have

met her at Berne, it is true; but she never asked me to come and see where she lived,—only bid me salute the wife and children, and said she would soon come, but she never did. It is true she was not long at Berne, but was much out at service in the neighbouring chateaux, and in French Switzerland, from what I hear. She had busy blood, and a fanciful head, which never could stay long in the same place: but, with that, well-conducted and proof-faithful; * and one might trust her fearlessly with anything. At last there came a report that she had married a rich old gentleman, who did that to punish his relations, with whom he was very angry; but I didn't much believe it, nor much think about it. And then, all of a sudden, I got word that I must go directly to my sister if I wanted to see her alive, and that she lived in the country by Morat. So I set out, and got there in time to see her die; but was not able to say much to her. As soon as she was buried, I came back as fast as I could. I was in a hurry to get home, for since I first set up house I had never lost so much time about the world.'

'What's that?—lost so much time, indeed!' cried Madame the Syndic. 'Ah, nonsense;—with your fifty thousand crowns, are you going to keep carrying brooms about the country?'

'But very certainly, Madame the Syndic,' said Hansli, 'I only half trust the thing; it seems to me

* "Fidèle à toute épreuve."

impossible I should have so much. After all, they say it can't fail; but be it as it will, I shall go on living my own life: so that if there comes any hitch in the business, people shan't be able to say of me, "Ah, he thought himself already a gentleman, did he? Now he's glad to go back to his cart!" But if the money really comes to me, I shall leave my brooms, though not without regret; but it would all the same, then, make the world talk and laugh if I went on; and I will not have that.'

'But that fortune is in safe hands,—it runs no danger?' asked M. the Syndic.

'I think so,' said Hansli. 'I promised some money to the man, if the heritage really came to me; then he got angry, and said, "If it's yours, you'll have it; and if it isn't, money won't get it: for the expenses and taxes, you'll have the account in proper time and place." Then I saw the thing was well placed; and I can wait well enough, till the time's up.'

'But, in truth,' said Madame the Syndic, 'I can't understand such a sangfroid! One has never seen the like of that in Israel. That would make me leap out of my skin, if I was your wife.'

* 'You had better not,' said Hansli, 'at least until you have found somebody able to put you into it again.'

This sangfroid, and his carrying on his business, reconciled many people to Hansli; who were not the less very envious of him: some indeed thought him a fool, and wanted to buy the succession of

him, declaring he would get nothing out of it but lawsuits.

‘What would you have?’ said Hansli. ‘In this world, one is sure of nothing. It will be time to think of it if the affair gets into a mess.’

But the affair got into nothing of the sort. Legal time expired, he got invitation to Berne, when all difficulties were cleared away.

When his wife saw him come back so rich, she began, first, to cry; and then, to scream.

So that Hansli had to ask her, again and again, what was the matter with her, and whether anything had gone wrong.

‘Ah, now,’ said his wife, at last,—(for she cried so seldom, that she had all the more trouble to stop, when once she began),—‘Ah, now, you will despise me, because you are so rich, and think that you would like to have another sort of wife than me. I’ve done what I could, to this day; but now I’m nothing but an old rag.* If only I was already six feet under ground!’

Thereupon Hansli sat himself down in his arm-chair, and said:

‘Wife, listen. Here are now nearly thirty years that we have kept house; and thou knowest, what one would have, the other would have, too. I’ve never once beaten thee, and the bad words we may have said to each other would be easily counted. Well, wife, I tell thee, do not begin to be ill-tempered

* “Patraque,”—machine out of repair, and useless.

now, or do anything else than you have always done. Everything must remain between us as in the past. This inheritance does not come from me ; nor from thee : but from the good God, for us two, and for our children. And now, I advise thee, and hold it for as sure a thing as if it were written in the Bible, if you speak again of this to me but once, be it with crying, or without, I will give thee a beating with a new rope, such as that they may hear thee cry from here to the Lake of Constance. Behold what is said : now do as thou wilt.'

It was resolute speaking ; much more resolute than the diplomatic notes between Prussia and Austria. The wife knew where she was, and did not recommence her song. Things remained between them as they had been. Before abandoning his brooms, Hansli gave a turn of his hand to them, and made a present of a dozen to all his customers, carrying them to each in his own person. He has repeated many a time since, and nearly always with tears in his eyes, that it was a day he could never forget, and that he never would have believed people loved him so.

Farming his own land, he kept his activity and simplicity, prayed and worked as he had always done , but he knew the difference between a farmer and a broom-seller, and did honour to his new position as he had to his old one. He knew well, already, what was befitting in a farmer's house, and did now for others as he had been thankful to have had done for himself.

The good God spared both of them to see their sons-in-law happy in their wives, and their daughters-in-law full of respect and tenderness for their husbands; and were they yet alive this day, they would see what deep roots their family had struck in their native land, because it has remained faithful to the vital germs of domestic life; the love of work; and religion: foundation that cannot be overthrown, unmoved by mocking chance, or wavering winds."

I have no time, this month, to debate any of the debateable matters in this story, though I have translated it that we may together think of them as occasion serves. In the meantime, note that the heads of question are these:—

I. (Already suggested in my letter for March, 1874. Vol. II., pp. 313, 314.) What are the relative dignities and felicities of affection, in simple and gentle loves? How far do you think the regard existing between Hansli and his wife may be compared, for nobleness and delight, to Sir Philip Sidney's regard for—his neighbour's wife; or the relations between Hansli and his sister, terminating in the brief 'was not able to say much to her,' comparable to those between Sidney and his sister, terminating in the completion of the brother's Psalter by the sister's indistinguishably perfect song?

II. If there be any difference, and you think the gentle hearts have in anywise the better,—how far

do you think this separation between gentle and simple inevitable? Suppose Sir Philip, for instance—among his many accomplishments—had been also taught the art of making brooms,—(as indeed I doubt not but his sister knew how to use them,)—and time had thus been left to the broom-makers of his day for the fashioning of sonnets? or the reading of more literature than a ‘chapitre’ on the Sunday afternoons? Might such—not ‘division’ but ‘collation’—of labour have bettered both their lives?

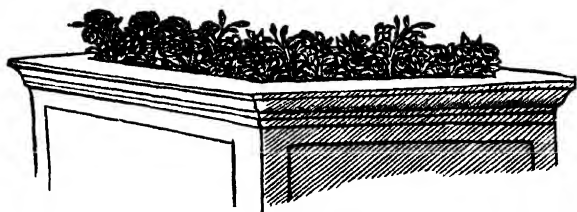
III. Or shall we rather be content with the apparent law of nature that there shall be divine Astrophels in the intellectual heaven, and peaceful earthly glowworms on the banks below; or even—on the Evangelical theory of human nature—worms without any glow? And shall we be content to see our broom-makers’ children, at the best, growing up as willows by the brook—or in the simplest and innumerablest crowd, as rushes in a marsh;—so long as they have wholesome pith and sufficing strength to be securely sat upon in rush-bottomed chairs; while their masters’ and lords’ children grow as roses on the mount of Sharon, and untoiling lilies in the vales of Lebanon?

IV. And even if we admit that the lives at Penshurst, and by the woods of Muri, though thus to be kept separate, are yet, each in their manner, good, how far is the good of either of them dependent merely, as our reverend Novelist tells us, on “work” (with lance or willow wand) and

"religion," or how far on the particular circumstances and landscape of Kent and Canton Berne,—while, in other parts of England and Switzerland, less favourably conditioned, the ministration of Mr. Septimus Hansard and Mr. Felix Neff will be always required, for the mitigation of the deeper human misery,—meditation on which is to make our sweet English ladies comfortable in nursing their cats?

Leaving the first two of these questions to the reader's thoughts, I will answer the last two for him;—The extremities of human degradation are not owing to natural causes; but to the habitual preying upon the labour of the poor by the luxury of the rich; and they are only encouraged and increased by the local efforts of religious charity. The clergy can neither absolve the rich from their sins, for money—nor release them from their duties, for love. Their business is not to soothe, by their saintly and distant example, the soft moments of cat-nursing; but sternly to forbid cat-nursing, till no child is left unnursed. And if this true discipline of the Church were carried out, and the larger body of less saintly clerical gentlemen, and *Infelix* Neffs, who now dine with the rich and preach to the poor, were accustomed, on the contrary, to dine with the poor and preach to the rich; though still the various passions and powers of the several orders would remain where the providence of Heaven placed them—and the useful reed and useless rose would still bind the wintry waters with

their border, and brighten the May sunshine with their bloom,—for each, their happy being would be fulfilled in peace in the garden of the world, and the glow, if not of immortal, at least of sacredly bequeathed, life, and endlessly cherished memory, abide even within its chambers of the tomb.



LETTER LVI

TIME-HONOURED LANCASTER

IN an article forwarded to me from a local paper, urging what it can in defence of the arrangements noticed by me as offensive, at Kirby Lonsdale and Clapham, I find this sentence :

“The squire’s house does not escape, though one can see no reason for the remark unless it be that Mr. Ruskin dislikes lords, squires, and clergymen.”

Now I have good reason for supposing this article to have been written by a gentleman ;—and even an amiable gentleman,—who feeling himself hurt, and not at all wishing to hurt anybody, very naturally cries out : and thinks it monstrous in me to hurt *him* ; or his own pet lord, or squire. But he never thinks what wrong there may be in printing his own momentary impression of the character of a man who has been thirty years before the public, without taking the smallest pains to ascertain whether his notion be true or false.

It happens, by Fors’ appointment, that the piece of my early life which I have already written for this month’s letter, sufficiently answers the imputation of my dislike to lords and squires. But I will preface it, in order to illustrate my dislike of clergymen, by

a later bit of biography ; which, at the rate of my present progress in giving account of myself, I should otherwise, as nearly as I can calculate, reach only about the year 1975.

Last summer, in Rome, I lodged at the Hotel de Russie ; and, in the archway of the courtyard of that mansion, waited usually, in the mornings, a Capuchin friar, begging for his monastery.

Now, though I greatly object to any clergyman's coming and taking me by the throat, and saying 'Pay me that thou owest,' I never pass a begging friar without giving him sixpence, or the equivalent fivepence of foreign coin ;—extending the charity even occasionally as far as tenpence, if no fivepenny-bit chance to be in my purse. And this particular begging friar having a gentle face, and a long white beard, and a beautiful cloak, like a blanket ; and being altogether the pleasantest sight, next to Sandro Botticelli's Zipporah, I was like to see in Rome in the course of the day, I always gave him the extra fivepence for looking so nice ; which generosity so worked on his mind,—(the more usual English religious sentiment in Rome expending itself rather in buying poetical pictures of monks than in filling their bellies)—that, after some six or seven doles of tenpences, he must needs take my hand one day, and try to kiss it. Which being only just able to prevent, I took him round the neck and kissed his lips instead : and this, it seems, was more to him than the tenpences, for, next day, he brought me a little reliquary, with a certificate

fibre in it of St. Francis' cloak, (the hair one, now preserved at Assisi); and when afterwards I showed my friend Fra Antonio, the Assisi sacristan, what I had got, it was a pleasure to see him open his eyes, wider than Monsieur the Syndic at Hansli's fifty thousand crowns. He thought I must have come by it dishonestly; but not I, a whit,—for I most carefully explained to the Capuchin, when he brought it to me, that I was more a Turk than a Catholic;—but he said I might keep the reliquary, for all that.

Contenting myself, - for the moment, with this illustration of my present dislike of clergymen, I return to earlier days.

But for the reader's better understanding of such further progress of my poor little life as I may trespass on his patience in describing, it is now needful that I give some account of my father's mercantile position in London.

The firm of which he was head partner may be yet remembered by some of the older city houses, as carrying on their business in a small counting-house on the first floor of narrow premises, in as narrow a thoroughfare of East London,—Billiter Street, the principal traverse from Leadenhall Street into Fenchurch Street.

The names of the three partners were given in full on their brass plate under the counting-house bell,—Ruskin, Telford, and Domecq.

Mr. Domecq's name should have been the first, by rights, for my father and Mr. Telford were only his agents. He was the sole proprietor of the

estate which was the main capital of the firm,—the vineyard of Macharnudo, the most precious hillside, for growth of white wine, in the Spanish peninsula. The quality of the Macharnudo vintage essentially fixed the standard of Xeres 'sack,' or 'dry'—secco—sherris, or sherry, from the days of Henry the Fifth to our own; the unalterable and unrivalled chalk-marl of it putting a strength into the grape which age can only enrich and darken,—never impair.

Mr. Peter Domecq was, I believe, Spanish born; and partly French, partly English bred: a man of strictest honour, and kindly disposition; how descended, I do not know; how he became possessor of his vineyard, I do not know; what position he held, when young, in the firm of Gordon, Murphy, and Company, I do not know; but in their house he watched their head clerk, my father, during his nine years of duty, and when the house broke up, asked him to be his own agent in England. My father saw that he could fully trust Mr. Domecq's honour, and feeling;—but not so fully either his sense, or his industry: and insisted, though taking only his agent's commission, on being both nominally, and practically, the head-partner of the firm.

Mr. Domecq lived chiefly in Paris; rarely visiting his Spanish estate, but having perfect knowledge of the proper process of its cultivation, and authority over its labourers almost like a chief's over his clan. He kept the wines at the highest possible standard; and allowed my father to manage all matters concerning their sale, as he thought best. The second

partner, Mr. Henry Telford, brought into the business, what capital was necessary for its London branch. The premises in Billiter Street belonged to him; and he had a pleasant country home at Widmore, near Bromley; a quite far-away Kentish village in those days.

He was a perfect type of an English country gentleman of moderate fortune;—unmarried, living with three unmarried sisters—who, in the refinement of their highly educated, unpretending, benevolent, and felicitous lives, remain in my memory more like the figures in a beautiful story than realities. Neither in story, nor in reality, have I ever again heard of, or seen, anything like Mr. Henry Telford;—so gentle, so humble, so affectionate, so clear in common sense, so fond of horses,—and so entirely incapable of doing, thinking, or saying, anything that had the slightest taint in it of the race-course or the stable.

Yet I believe he never missed any great race; passed the greater part of his life on horseback; and hunted during the whole Leicestershire season;—but never made a bet, never had a serious fall, and never hurt a horse. Between him and my father there was absolute confidence, and the utmost friendship that could exist without community of pursuit. My father was greatly proud of Mr. Telford's standing among the country gentlemen; and Mr. Telford was affectionately respectful to my father's steady industry and infallible commercial instinct. Mr. Telford's actual part in the conduct

of the business was limited to attendance in the counting-house during two months at midsummer, when my father took his holiday, and sometimes for a month at the beginning of the year, when he travelled for orders. At these times Mr. Telford rode into London daily from Widmore, signed what letters and bills needed signature, read the papers, and rode home again: any matters needing deliberation were referred to my father, or awaited his return. All the family at Widmore would have been limitlessly kind to my mother and me, if they had been permitted any opportunity; but my mother always felt, in cultivated society,—and was too proud to feel with patience,—the defects of her own early education, and therefore (which was the true and fatal sign of such defect) never familiarly visited any one whom she did not feel to be, in some sort, her inferior.

Nevertheless, Mr. Telford had a singularly important influence in my education. By, I believe, his sister's advice, he gave me, as soon as it was published, the illustrated edition of Rogers' 'Italy.' This book was the first means I had of looking carefully at Turner's work: and I might, not without some appearance of reason, attribute to the gift the entire direction of my life's energies. But it is the great error of thoughtless biographers to attribute to the accident which introduces some new phase of character, all the circumstances of character which gave the accident importance. The essential point to be noted, and accounted for, was that I could

understand Turner's work when I saw it; not by what chance or in what year it was first seen.

Poor Mr. Telford, nevertheless, was always held by papa and mamma primarily responsible for my Turner insanities.

In a more direct, though less intended way, his help to me was important. For, before my father thought it right to hire a carriage for the above-mentioned midsummer holiday, Mr. Telford always lent us his own travelling chariot.

Now the old English chariot is the most luxurious of travelling carriages, for two persons, or even for two persons and so much of third personage as I possessed at three years old. The one in question was hung high, so that we could see well over stone dykes and average hedges out of it; such elevation being attained by the old-fashioned folding steps, with a velvet padded cushion fitting into the recess of the door,—steps which it was one of my chief travelling delights to see the hostlers fold up and down; though my delight was painfully alloyed by envious ambition to be allowed to do it myself:—but I never was,—lest I should pinch my fingers.

The 'dickey,'—(to think that I should never till this moment have asked myself the derivation of that word, and now be unable to get at it!)—being, typically, that commanding seat in her Majesty's mail, occupied by the Guard; and classical, even in modern literature, as the scene of Mr. Bob Sawyers' arrangements with Sam,—was thrown far back in Mr. Telford's chariot, so as to give perfectly

comfortable room for the legs (if one chose to travel outside on fine days), and to afford beneath it spacious area to the boot, a storehouse of rearward miscellaneous luggage. Over which—with all the rest of forward and superficial luggage—my nurse Anne presided, both as guard and packer; unrivalled, she, in the flatness and precision of her in-laying of dresses, as in turning of pancakes; the fine precision, observe, meaning also the easy wit and invention of her art; for, no more in packing a trunk than commanding a campaign, is precision possible without foresight.

Posting, in those days, being universal, so that at the leading inns in every country town, the cry "Horses out!" down the yard, as one drove up, was answered, often instantly, always within five minutes, by the merry trot through the archway of the booted and bright-jacketed rider, with his caparisoned pair,—there was no driver's seat in front: and the four large, admirably fitting and sliding windows, admitting no drop of rain when they were up, and never sticking as they were let down, formed one large moving oriel, out of which one saw the country round, to the full half of the horizon. My own prospect was more extended still, for my seat was the little box containing my clothes, strongly made, with a cushion on one end of it; set upright in front (and well forward), between my father and mother. I was thus not the least in their way, and my horizon of sight the widest possible. When no object of particular

interest presented itself, I trotted, keeping time with the postboy—on my trunk cushion for a saddle, and whipped my father's legs for horses; at first theoretically only, with dexterous motion of wrist; but ultimately in a quite practical and efficient manner, my father having presented me with a silver-mounted postillion's whip.

The midsummer holiday, for better enjoyment of which Mr. Telford provided us with these luxuries, began usually on the fifteenth of May, or thereabouts;—my father's birthday was the tenth; on that day I was always allowed to gather the gooseberries for his first gooseberry pie of the year, from the tree between the buttresses on the north wall of the Herne Hill garden; so that we could not leave before that *festa*. The holiday itself consisted in a tour for orders through half the English counties; and a visit (if the counties lay northward) to my aunt in Scotland.

The mode of journeying was as fixed as that of our home life. We went from forty to fifty miles a day, starting always early enough in the morning to arrive comfortably to four-o'clock dinner. Generally, therefore, getting off at six o'clock, a stage or two were done before breakfast, with the dew on the grass, and first scent from the hawthorns: if in the course of the mid-day drive there were any gentleman's house to be seen,—or, better still, a lord's—or, best of all, a duke's,—my father baited the horses, and took my mother and me reverently through the state rooms; always speaking a little

under our breath to the housekeeper, major domo, or other authority in charge; and gleaning worshipfully what fragmentary illustrations of the history and domestic ways of the family might fall from their lips. My father had a quite infallible natural judgment in painting; and though it had never been cultivated so as to enable him to understand the Italian schools, his sense of the power of the nobler masters in northern work was as true and passionate as the most accomplished artist's. He never, when I was old enough to care for what he himself delighted in, allowed me to look for an instant at a bad picture; and if there were a Reynolds, Velasquez, Vandyck, or Rembrandt in the rooms, he would pay the surliest housekeepers into patience until we had seen it to heart's content; if none of these, I was allowed to look at Guido, Carlo Dolce,—or the more skilful masters of the Dutch school,—Cuyp, Teniers, Hobbima, Wouvermans; but never at any second-rate or doubtful examples.

I wonder how many of the lower middle class are now capable of going through a nobleman's house, with judgment of this kind; and yet with entirely unenvious and reverent delight in the splendour of the abode of the supreme and beneficent being who allows them thus to enter his paradise?

If there were no nobleman's house to be seen, there was certainly, in the course of the day's journey, some ruined castle or abbey; some

celebrated village church, or stately cathedral. We had always unstinted time for these ; and if I was at disadvantage because neither my father nor mother could tell me enough history to make the buildings authoritatively interesting, I had at least leisure and liberty to animate them with romance in my own fashion.

I am speaking, however, now, of matters relating to a more advanced age than that to which I have yet brought myself :—age in which all these sights were only a pleasant amazement to me, and panoramic apocalypse of a lovely world.

Up to that age, at least, I cannot but hope that my readers will agree with me in thinking the tenour of my life happy, and the modes of my education, on the whole, salutary.

Admitting them to have been so, I would now question farther ; and, I imagine, such question cannot but occur to my readers' minds, also,—how far education, and felicities, of the same kind, may be attainable for young people in general.

Let us consider, then, how many conditions must meet ; and how much labour must have been gone through, both by servile and noble persons, before this little jaunty figure, seated on its box of clothes, can trot through its peaceful day of mental development.

I. A certain number of labourers in Spain, living on dry bread and onions, must have pruned and trodden grapes ;—cask-makers, cellarmen, and other functionaries attending on them.

II. Rough sailors must have brought the wine into the London Docks.

III. My father and his clerks must have done a great deal of arithmetical and epistolary work, before my father could have profit enough from the wine to pay for our horses, and our dinner.

IV. The tailor must have given his life to the dull business of making clothes—the wheelwright and carriage-maker to their woodwork—the smith to his buckles and springs—the postillion to his riding—the horse-breeder and breaker to the cattle in his field and stable,—before I could make progress in this pleasant manner, even for a single stage.

V. Sundry English Kings and Barons must have passed their lives in military exercises, and gone to their deaths in military practices, to provide me with my forenoon's entertainments in ruined castles; or founded the great families whose servants were to be my hosts.

VI. Vandyck and Velasquez, and many a painter before them, must have spent their lives in learning and practising their laborious businesses.

VII. Various monks and abbots must have passed their lives in pain, with fasting and prayer; and a large company of stonemasons occupied themselves in their continual service, in order to provide me, in defect of castles and noblemen's seats, with amusement in the way of abbeys and cathedrals.

How far, then, it remains to be asked, supposing my education in any wise exemplary, can all these advantages be supplied by the modern school board,

to every little boy born in the prosperous England of this day? And much more in that glorious England of the future; in which there will be no abbeys, (all having been shaken down, as my own sweet Furness is fast being, by the luggage trains); no castles, except such as may have been spared to be turned into gaols, like that of "time-honoured Lancaster," also in my own neighbourhood; no parks, because Lord Derby's patent steam agriculture will have cut down all the trees; no lords, nor dukes, because modern civilization won't be Lorded over, nor Led anywhere; no gentlemen's seats, except in the Kirby Lonsdale style; and no roads anywhere, except trams and rails?

Before, however, entering into debate as to the methods of education to be adopted in these coming times, let me examine a little, in next letter, with help from my readers of aristocratic tendencies, what the real product of this olden method of education was intended to be; and whether it was worth the cost.

For the impression on the aristocratic mind of the day was always (especially supposing I had been a squire's or a lord's son, instead of a merchant's) that such little jaunty figure, trotting in its easy chariot, was, as it were, a living diamond, without which the watch of the world could not possibly go; or even, that the diminutive darling was a kind of Almighty Providence in its first breeches, by whose tiny hands and infant fiat, the blessings of food and raiment were continually provided for God's Spanish

labourers in His literal vineyard ; for God's English sailors, seeing His wonders in the deep ; for God's tailors' men, sitting in attitude of Chinese Josh for ever ; for the divinely appointed wheelwrights, carpenters, horses and riders, hostlers and Gaius-mine-hosts, necessary to my triumphal progress ; and for my nurse behind in the dickey. And it never once entered the head of any aristocratic person,—nor would have ever entered mine, I suppose, unless I had “the most analytical mind in Europe,”—that in verity it was not I who fed my nurse, but my nurse me ; and that a great part of the world had been literally put behind me as a dickey,—and all the aforesaid inhabitants of it, somehow, appointed to be nothing but my nurses ; the beautiful product intended, by papa and mamma, being—a Bishop, who should graciously overlook these tribes of inferior beings, and instruct their ignorance in the way of their souls' salvation.

As the master of the St. George's Company, I request their permission to convey their thanks to Mr. Plimsoll, for his Christian, knightly, and valiant stand, made against the recreant English Commons, on Thursday, 22nd July, 1875.

LETTER LVII

MICHAEL'S SCORN

[I am honoured in the charge given me, without dissent, by the present members of the St. George's Company, to convey their thanks to MR. SAMUEL PLIMSOLL, in the terms stated at the close of my last letter]

I HAVE received, from the author, M. Emile de Lavelaye, his pamphlet,—“Protestantism and Catholicism in their bearing upon the Liberty and Prosperity of Nations, with an introductory Letter by Mr. Gladstone.” I do not know why M. de Lavelaye sent me this pamphlet. I thank him for the courtesy ; but he has evidently read none of my books, or must have been aware that he could not have written anything more contrary to the positions which I am politically maintaining. On the other hand, I have read none of *his* books, and I gather from passages in his pamphlet that there may be much in them to which I should be able to express entire adhesion.

But of the pamphlet in question, and its preface, he will, I trust, pardon my speaking in the same frank terms which I should have used had it accidentally come under my notice, instead of by the author's gift. The pamphlet is especially displeasing to me,

because it speaks of 'Liberty' under the common assumption of its desirableness; whereas my own teaching has been, and is, that Liberty, whether in the body, soul, or political estate of men, is only another word for Death, and the final issue of Death, putrefaction: the body, spirit, and political estate being alike healthy only by their bonds and laws; and by Liberty being instantly disengaged into mephitic vapour.

But the matter of this pamphlet, no less than the assumption it is based on, is hateful to me; reviving, as it does, the miserable question of the schism between Catholic and Protestant, which is entirely ridiculous and immaterial; and taking no note whatever of the true and eternal schism, cloven by the very sword of Michael, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not.

(The passage now and henceforward omitted in this place, contained an attack on Mr. Gladstone written under a complete misconception of his character. See, for explanation of it, the beginning of the third letter in the second series of Fors.* The blank space is left partly in order not to confuse the Index references, partly in due memorial of rash judgment.)

* * * * *

The fact being that I am, at this central time of my life's work, at pause because I cannot set down any form of religious creed so simple, but that the

* [Letter LXXXVII., Vol. IV. of this edition.]

requirement of its faithful signature by persons desiring to become Companions of St. George, would exclude some of the noblest champions of justice and charity now labouring for men; while, on the other hand, I cannot set down the first principles of children's noble education without finding myself in collision with an almost resistless infidel mob, which is incapable of conceiving—how much less of obeying—the first laws of human decency, order, and honour. So that indeed I am fain to ask, with a Leeds correspondent, what is to be done for young folks to whom “music has little attraction, except in the form of dance, and pictures are nothing”?

With her pardon, pictures are much to this class of young people. The woodcuts of halfpenny novels representing scenes of fashionable life,—those representing men murdering their wives, in the *Police News*,—and, finally, those which are to be bought only in the back-shop,—have enormous educational influence on the young British public: which its clergymen, alike ignorant of human nature and human art, think to counteract—by decorating their own churches, forsooth,—and by coloured prints of the story of Joseph; while the lower tribes of them—Moody's and Sankeys—think to turn modern musical taste to account by fitting negro melodies to hymns.

And yet, my correspondent may be thankful that some remnant of delight is still taken in dance-music. It is the last protest of the human spirit,

in the poor fallen creatures, against the reign of the absolute Devil, Pandemonium with Mammon on the throne, instead of Lucifer,—the Son of the Earth, Lord of Hell, instead of the Son of the Morning.

Let her stand in the midst of the main railroad station at Birmingham; and think—what music, or dancing, or other entertainment fit for prodigal sons could be possible in that pious and little prodigal locality.* Let her read the account of our modern pastoral music, at page 95 of my fifth letter,—of modern Venetian "*Barcarolle*," page 377 of Letter XIX. and 393 of Letter XX.,—and of our modern Campanile, and Muezzin call to prayer, at page 162 of this Fors.

"Work is prayer"—thinks your Wakefield Mahometan;—his vociferous minaret, in the name, and by the name, of the Devil, shall summon English votaries to such worship for five miles round; that is to say, over one hundred square miles of English land, the Pandemoniacal voice of the Archangel-trumpet thus arouses men out of their sleep; and Wakefield becomes Wakeful-field, over that blessed space of acreage.

Yes; my correspondent may be thankful that still some feeble lust for dancing on the green,—still some dim acknowledgment, by besotted and stupefied brains, of the laws of tune and time known to their fathers and mothers—remains possible to

* Compare my Birmingham correspondent's opinion of David's "*twangling on the harp*," Letter VI. (Vol. I., p. 112).

the poor wretches discharged by the excursion trains for a gasp of breath, and a gleam of light, amidst what is left to them, and us, of English earth and heaven. Waltzing, drunk, in the country roads by our villages; yet innocently drunk, and sleepy at sunset; not like their born masters and teachers, dancing, wilfully, the cancan of hell, with harlots, at seven in the morning.*

Music and dancing! They are quite the two primal instruments of education. Make them licentious; let Mr. John Stuart Mill have the dis-ordering of them, so that (see page 242 of Letter XII.) "no one shall be guided, or governed, or directed in the way they should go,"—and they sink to lower and lower depth—till the dance becomes Death's; and the music—a shriek of death by strychnine. But let Miriam and David, and the Virgins of Israel, have the ordering of them, and the music becomes at last the Eternal choir; and the Dance, the Karol-dance of Christmas, evermore.†

Virgins of Israel, or of England, richly clad by your kings, and "rejoicing in the dance," how is it you do not divide this sacred,—*if* sacred,—joy of yours with the poor? If it can ever be said of you, as birds of God,

* 'Sesame and Lilies,' § 36, note.

† Compare Letter XXIV (Vol. I, page 500), and Dante, *Paradiso*, xxiv. 16.

"Cosi, quelle carole differente—
Mente danzando, della sua ricchezza
Mi si facean stimar, veloci e lente"

"Oh beauteous birds, methinks ye measure
Your movements to some heavenly tune,"

can you not show wherein the heavenliness of it consists, to—suppose—your Sunday-school classes? At present, you keep the dancing to yourselves, and graciously teach *them* the catechism. Suppose you were to try for a little while, learning the catechism yourselves; and teaching *them*—to dance?

Howbeit, in St. George's schools, this, the most 'decorous,' rightly taught, of all exercises, shall not fail of its due discipline to any class whatsoever:—reading, writing, and accounts may all be spared where pupils show no turn to any of those scholarships, but music and dancing, never.* Generally, however, it will be the best singers and dancers who ask for teaching also in literature and art; for all, there shall at least be the way open to these; and for none, danger or corruption possible in these. For in their libraries there shall be none but noble books, and in their sight none but noble art.

There is no real difficulty or occasion for dispute in choosing these. Admit the principle of selection, and the practice is easy enough; only, like all practical matters, the work must be done by one man, sufficiently qualified for it; and not by a council. If he err, the error may be represented by any one cognizant of it, and by council corrected. But the main work must be done single-handed.

Thus, for the use of the St. George's Company, I

* Compare Letter VIII, p. 158; and Letter IX., p. 174.

shall myself, if my life is spared, write out a list of books which without any question will be found serviceable in their libraries ; *—a system of art instruction which will be secure so far as it reaches ; and a list of purchaseable works of art, which it will be desirable to place in the national schools and museums of the company. With this list of purchaseable works, I shall name, as I have time, those in the museums of Europe which ought to be studied, to the exclusion of those on which time would be wasted.

I have no doubt that this work, though done at first for the St. George's Company, will be found generally useful, and especially that the system of drawing arranged for them will in many respects supersede that of Kensington. I had intended to write it separately for the use of schools ; but after repeated endeavours to arrange it in a popular form, find that it will not so shape itself availably, but must consist of such broad statements of principle as my now enlarged experience enables me to make ; with references to the parts of my other books in which they are defended or illustrated : and of directions for practice given as I can get illustrations of them prepared ; leaving the systematization of them to be made by the master of each drawing school, according to the requirements of his scholars. (See Vol. I., Letter IX., p. 177.)

* This will be added to by future Masters of the Company, with the farther means of specification indicated in pages 406 and 407 of Letter XXI.

For example of the impossibility of publishing on a system. It happens to be now fine weather here in Lancashire ;—I am able, therefore, to draw out of doors ; and am painting a piece of foreground vegetation, which I don't want to be used by students till after at least fifty other exercises have been gone through. But I must do this one while light and life serve ; and not wait till I am sixty, to do work which my eyes are not good enough for at fifty-five.

And if the readers of Fors think my letters too desultory, let them consider what this chief work, specified in page 177 of Letter IX., involves. No one has the least notion of the quantity of manual labour I have to go through, to discharge my duty as a teacher of Art. Look at the frontispiece to Letter XX., which is photographed from one of my architectural sketches ; and if you can draw, copy a bit of it ;—try merely the bead moulding with its dentils, in the flat arch over the three small ones, lowest on the left. Then examine those three small ones themselves. You think I have drawn them distorted, carelessly, I suppose. No. That distortion is essential to the Gothic of the Pisan school ; and I measured every one of the curves of those cusps on the spot, to the tenth of an inch ; and I ought to be engraving and publishing those drawings, by rights ; but, meantime, your Pisan Republicans dash the chapel down, for a job in rebuilding it ;—and the French Emperor dashes every cathedral in France to pieces, to find his masons work,—and gets for result, Reuter's telegram,

(postscript to Letter VI., Vol. I., p. 123); and I, with my eyes full of dust and driven smoke, am obliged to leave my own work, and write Fors, more and more necessarily becoming principal, as I find all my other work rendered vain.

Nevertheless, in the course of Fors itself, I shall try to give, as aforesaid, art instruction enough for all need, if any one cares to obey it. How little any one is likely to care, the closing paragraphs of this letter from Wakefield show so clearly that I think it desirable to print them here consecutively, as part of the text of Fors itself.

"Did you ever hear Wakefield chimes? We were very proud of them in the old time. They had a round of pleasant sleepy tunes, that never failed us through summer suns and winter frost; and came to be bound up indelibly with the early memories of us children. How I loved to hear them as I bounded, full of morning gladness, across the green Vicar's Croft to school; or at night when lying an unwilling prisoner in bed, before the warm summer evening was ended. To my childish fancy there was a strange wizardry bound up with that dark church steeple, frosted and crumbling with age, which would break out overhead into mysterious music when I was far afield, but expecting it.

"Years after, when poor and lonely in a great foreign city, I came, one bitter winter's day, upon an obscure cloister church standing by a frozen river. It was a city without bells, and I had often longed for the familiar sound. I was dreadfully homesick that day, and stood upon the bridge, hapless, and listless; looking at the strange spire, the strange houses and frozen-up boats, in

a kind of dream. Suddenly the cloister tower struck the hour,—four o'clock of a dark December day, and presently it broke into a chime.

“It was a very simple ditty; but what a passion of longing it wakened for England and the old chimes of that little English town! I felt as if my heart could bear no more. I *must* go home; I *must* see the old places again, cost what it might. But morning brought fresh counsels, and many a year passed before I revisited the old place.

“At last I was there again, after many disappointments, and laid my head to rest once more beneath the shadow of the old steeple.

“I woke with an expectant heart. It was a bright May day, such as I remembered twenty years before. The big church bell tolled nine: then came a pause, and my thirsty ears were strained to catch the first sounds of the dear old chimes. ‘Ding’ went a treble bell high in the air, the first note of ‘Tara’s Halls,’ and then ‘—a hideous sound I cannot describe, a prolonged malignant yell, broke from the sky and seemed to fill the earth. I stopped my ears and ran indoors, but the sound followed to the innermost chambers. It gathered strength and malignancy every moment, and seemed to blast all within its reach. It lasted near two minutes, and ended with a kind of spasm and howl that made every nerve shudder. I do not exaggerate. I cannot adequately describe the hideous sound. When I had recovered my wits, I asked the meaning of this horrible noise. My informant, a rising young townsman of the new stamp, told me that it was the new steam-whistle at the foundry, commonly called the ‘American Devil;’ that it was the most powerful in the West Riding, and could be heard five miles off.

"It was only at half-power then, calling the workmen from breakfast ; but at six in the morning I could hear it in double force. I asked if it was possible that people would quietly put up with such a hideous disturbance. He owned that the old inhabitants did not like it, but then, he said, they were a sleepy set, and wanted stirring up.

"Indeed, I actually found that the town was infected by four other similar whistles, profaning dawn and eve with their heaven-defying screech.

"The nuisance has been abolished since, I hear. They say it actually killed one old lady by starting her up just at the only moment when it was possible for her weary nerves to get sleep. She happened to have a relation in the town council : a stir was made about it, and the whistles were suppressed.

"But the peaceful, half town, half rural life of Wakefield is gone for ever, I fear.

"Silk-mills and dye-works are encroaching on the corn-fields and pastures ; rows of jerry-built cottages are creeping up Pinder's Fields, where I used to pull orchises ; greasy mill-girls elbow ladies in the Westgate, and laugh and jeer at passing young men in a way that would have horrified the old inhabitants. And everywhere there is an indescribable smokiness and dirtiness more demoralizing than any tongue can tell, or mind conceive.

"Well, it is the 'march of the times.' It will go on, I suppose, as in other quiet pleasant English towns, until all the sweet Calder valley is swallowed up in the smoke of Tophet. They will cut the snowdrop wood down, and cover Heath Common with cheap villas, and make the old hall into an 'institution.' You know how it will be. A river black with filth and stagnant with foulness, a wilderness of toiling suburbs such as you saw at

Bradford; and where the cowslips and the corn grew, the earth will be thick with 'institutions.' There will be a Blind Institution, and an Eye and Ear Institution, an Orthopædic Institution, and a Magdalen Institution, and Mechanics' Institutions; and we shall hear a great deal of the liberality and beneficence of the cotton and iron kings of the place. But will all this compensate one little child for robbing it of its God-given birthright of earth and sky?

"I cannot believe it.

"Poor little martyrs! There will be no 'swallow twittering from the straw-built shed' for them,—only the American Devil calling father to his hot, hard day's labour. What can they make of it all? What kind of outlook will *they* have in coming years from the bridge of my early recollections? What I saw on the Medlock yesterday—such a hideous sight!—yet my husband remembers catching fish there. The gases would kill a fish like a lightning-stroke, now.

"And the poor children! It makes me so sad, having some of my own, to think of those who will be born there, with hearts as hungry for nature and truth as mine was; who will never see God's heaven, save through grimy panes and smoke; who will have no sweet cowslip-fields to walk in,—only the defiled pavement; who will grow hard and sour before childhood is over, with the riddle of their joyless lives.

"How I have drifted on! Your allusion to Wakefield Bridge in the Fors of February unloosed a flood of long-buried recollections. This is what you draw on yourself by opening your heart to others. Pray forgive the trespass on your time.

"Yours gratefully,

"E. L."

LETTER LVIII

THE CATHOLIC PRAYER

“Deus, a quo sancta desideria, recta consilia, et justa sunt opera, da servis tuis illam quam mundus dare non potest pacem, ut et cōrda nostra mandatis tuis, et, hostium sublata formidine, tempora, sint tuâ protectione tranquilla.”

“God, from whom are all holy desires, right counsels, and just works, give to Thy servants that peace which the world cannot, that both our hearts, in Thy commandments, and our times, the fear of enemies being taken away, may be calm under Thy guard.”

THE adulteration of this great Catholic prayer in our English church-service, (as needless as it was senseless, since the pure form of it contains nothing but absolutely Christian prayer, and is as fit for the most stammering Protestant lips as for Dante's), destroyed all the definite meaning of it,* and left

* Missing, in the phrase ‘that our hearts may be set to obey’ the entire sense of the balanced clause in the original,—namely, that the Law of God is *given* to be the shield and comfort of the soul against spiritual enemies, as the merciful angels encamp round us against earthly ones.

The following communication was sent to me on a postcard, without the writer's name; but it is worth notice:—

“‘Ut et corda nostra mandatis tuis *dedata*.’ If some manuscript

merely the vague impression of desire for peace, on quite unregarded terms. For of the millions of people who utter the prayer at least weekly, there is not one in a thousand who is ever taught, or can for themselves find out, either what a holy desire means, or a right counsel means, or a just work means,—or what the world is, or what the peace is which it cannot give. And half an hour after they have insulted God by praying to Him in this deadest of all dead languages, not understood of the people, they leave the church, themselves pacified in their perennial determination to put no check on their natural covetousness; to act on their own opinions, be they right or wrong; to do whatever they can make money by, be it just or

Breviary has omitted 'dedita,' it must be by a slip of the pen. The sense surely is this: that while there is either war or only an evil and deceitful peace within, self-surrender to the Divine commandments above and freedom from terror of foes around are alike impossible.

"In the English Prayer-book 'set' has the same meaning as in Psalm lxxviii. ver. 9 (*sic*: the writer means ver. 8); and the context shows the 'rest and quietness' desired, to be rest and quietness of spirit."

The 'context' cannot show anything of the sort, for the sentence is an entirely independent one: and the MS. I use is not a Breviary, but the most perfect Psalter and full service, including all the hymns quoted by Dante, that I have seen in English thirteenth-century writing. The omission of the word 'dedita' makes not the smallest difference to the point at issue—which is not the mistranslation of a word, but the breaking of a clause. The mistranslation nevertheless exists also; precisely *because*, in the English Prayer-book, 'set' has the same meaning as in Psalm lxxviii.; where the Latin word is 'direxit,' not 'dedit'; and where discipline is meant, not surrender.

unjust ; and to thrust themselves, with the utmost of their soul and strength, to the highest, by them attainable, pinnacle of the most bedrummed and betrumpeted booth in the Fair of the World.

The prayer, in its pure text, is essentially, indeed, a monastic one ; but it is written for the great Monastery of the Servants of God, whom the world hates. It cannot be uttered with honesty but by these ; nor can it ever be answered but with the peace bequeathed to these, 'not as the world giveth.'

Of which peace, the nature is not to be without war, but undisturbed in the midst of war ; and not without enemies, but without fear of them. It is a peace without pain, because desiring only what is holy ; without anxiety, because it thinks only what is right ; without disappointment, because a just work is always successful ; without sorrow, because 'great peace have they which love Thy Law, and nothing shall offend them ;' and without terror, because the God of all battles is its Guard.

So far as any living souls in the England of this day can use, understandingly, the words of this collect, they are already, consciously or not, companions of all good labourers in the vineyard of God. For those who use it reverently, yet have never set themselves to find out what the commandments of God are, nor how loveable they are, nor how far, instead of those commandments, the laws of the world are the only code they care for, nor how far they still think their own thoughts and speak their

own words, it is assuredly time to search out these things. And I believe that, after having searched them out, no sincerely good and religious person would find, whatever his own particular form of belief might be, anything which he could reasonably refuse, or which he ought in anywise to fear to profess before all men, in the following statement of creed and resolution, which must be written with their own hand, and signed, with the solemnity of a vow, by every person received into the St. George's Company.

- I. I trust in the Living God, Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things and creatures visible and invisible.

I trust in the kindness of His law, and the goodness of His work.

And I will strive to love Him, and keep His law, and see His work, while I live.

- II. I trust in the nobleness of human nature, in the majesty of its faculties, the fulness of its mercy, and the joy of its love.

And I will strive to love my neighbour as myself, and, even when I cannot, will act as if I did.

- III. I will labour, with such strength and opportunity as God gives me, for my own daily bread; and all that my hand finds to do, I will do with my might.

- IV. I will not deceive, or cause to be deceived, any human being for my gain or pleasure; nor

hurt, or cause to be hurt, any human being for my gain or pleasure; nor rob, or cause to be robbed, any human being for my gain or pleasure.

- V. I will not kill nor hurt any living creature needlessly, nor destroy any beautiful thing, but will strive to save and comfort all gentle life, and guard and perfect all natural beauty, upon the earth.
- VI. I will strive to raise my own body and soul daily into higher powers of duty and happiness; not in rivalry or contention with others, but for the help, delight, and honour of others, and for the joy and peace of my own life.
- VII. I will obey all the laws of my country faithfully; and the orders of its monarch, and of all persons appointed to be in authority under its monarch, so far as such laws or commands are consistent with what I suppose to be the law of God; and when they are not, or seem in anywise to need change, I will oppose them loyally and deliberately, not with malicious, concealed, or disorderly violence.
- VIII. And with the same faithfulness, and, under the limits of the same obedience, which I render to the laws of my country, and the commands of its rulers, I will obey the laws of the Society called of St. George, into which I am this day received; and the orders of its masters, and of all persons appointed to be in

authority under its masters, so long as I remain a Companion, called of St. George.

I will not enter in the present letter on any notice of the terms of this creed and vow; nor of the grounds which many persons whose help I sincerely desire, may perceive for hesitation in signing it. Further definitions of its meaning will be given as occasion comes; nor shall I ever ask any one to sign it whom I do not know to be capable of understanding and holding it in the sense in which it is meant. I proceed at once to define more explicitly those laws of the Company of St. George to which it refers, and which must, at least in their power, be known before they can be vowed fealty to.

The object of the Society, it has been stated again and again, is to buy land in England; and thereon to train into the healthiest and most refined life possible, as many Englishmen, Englishwomen, and English children, as the land we possess can maintain in comfort; to establish, for them and their descendants, a national store of continually augmenting wealth; and to organize the government of the persons, and administration of the properties, under laws which shall be just to all, and secure in their inviolable foundation on the Law of God.

"To buy land," I repeat, or beg it; but by no means to steal it, or trespass on it, as I perceive the present holders of the most part of it are too ready to do, finding any bits of road or common which they can pilfer unobserved. Are they quite

mad, then ; and do they think the monster mob, gaining every day in force and knowledge, will let their park walls stand much longer, on those dishonest terms ? Doubtful enough their standing is, even on any terms !

But our St. George's walls will be more securely founded, on this wise. The rents of our lands, though they will be required from the tenantry as strictly as those of any other estates, will differ from common rents primarily in being lowered, instead of raised, in proportion to every improvement made by the tenant ; secondly, in that they will be entirely used for the benefit of the tenantry themselves, or better culture of the estates, no money being ever taken by the landlords unless they earn it by their own personal labour.

For the benefit of the tenantry, I say ; but by no means, always, for benefit of which they can be immediately conscious. The rents of any particular farmer will seldom be returned to him in work on his own fields, or investment in undertakings which promote his interest. The rents of a rich estate in one shire of England may be spent on a poor one in another, or in the purchase of wild ground, anywhere, on which years of labour must be sunk before it can yield return ; or in minerals, or Greek vases, for the parish school. Therefore with the use made of the rents paid, the tenantry will have no practical concern whatever ; they will only recognize gradually that the use has been wise, in finding the prices of all serviceable articles

diminishing, and all the terms and circumstances of their lives indicative of increased abundance. They will have no more right, or disposition, to ask their landlord what he is doing with the rents, than they have now to ask him how many race-horses he keeps—or how much he has lost on them. But the difference between landlords who live in Piccadilly, and spend their rents at Epsom and Ascot, and landlords who live on the ground they are lords of, and spend their rents in bettering it, will not be long in manifesting itself to the simplest minded tenantry; nor, I believe, to the outside and antagonist world. -

Sundry questions lately asked me by intelligent correspondents as to the intended relations of the tenantry to the Society, may best be answered by saying simply what I shall do, if ever the collected wealth of the Company enables me to buy an estate for it as large as I could have bought for myself, if I had been a railroad contractor.

Of course I could not touch the terms of the existing leases. The only immediate difference would be, the definitely serviceable application of all the rents, as above stated. But as the leases fell in, I should offer renewal of them to the farmers I liked, on the single condition of their complying with the great vital law of the St. George's Company,—"no use of steam power,—nor of any machines where arms will serve"; allowing such reduction of rent as should fully compensate them for any disadvantage or loss which they could prove they

incurred under these conditions. I should give strict orders for the preservation of the existing timber; see that the streams were not wantonly polluted, and interfere in nothing else.

Such farms as were thrown up by their tenants, rather than submit to these conditions, I should be in no haste to re-let; but put land agents on them to cultivate them for the Society in the best manner, and sell their produce;—as soon as any well recommended tenant offered for them, submitting to our laws, he should have them for fixed rent. Thus I should give room for development of whatever personal faculty and energy I could find, and set, if successful, more easily followed example. Meantime my schools and museums, always small and instantly serviceable, would be multiplying among the villages,—youth after youth being instructed in the proper laws of justice, patriotism, and domestic happiness;—those of the Companions who could reside on the lands would, each on their own farm, establish entirely strict obedience to the ultimate laws determined upon as necessary:—if these laws are indeed, as I do not doubt but that sincere care can make them, pleasantly tenable by honest humanity,* they will be gradually accepted voluntarily by the free tenants; and the system is as certain to extend itself, on all sides, once seen to be right, as the branches of an oak sapling.

* Most of these will be merely old English laws revived; and the rest, Florentine or Roman. None will be instituted but such as have already been in force among great nations.

While, therefore, I am perfectly content, for a beginning, with our acre of rocky land given us by Mrs. Talbot, and am so little impatient for any increase that I have been quietly drawing ragged-robin leaves in Malham cove, instead of going to see another twenty acres promised in Worcestershire,—I am yet thinking out my system on a scale which shall be fit for wide European work. Of course the single Master of the Company cannot manage all its concerns as it extends. He must have, for his help, men holding the same relation to him which the Marshals of an army do to its General;—bearing, that is to say, his own authority where he is not present; and I believe no better name than ‘Marshal’ can be found for these. Beneath whom, there will again be the landlords, resident each in his own district; under these, the land agents, tenantry, tradesmen, and hired labourers, some of whom will be Companions, others Retainers, and others free tenants: and outside all this there will be of course an irregular cavalry, so to speak, of more or less helpful friends, who, without sharing in the work, will be glad to further it more or less, as they would any other benevolent institution.

The law that a Companion shall derive no profit from his companionship does not touch the results of his own work. A Companion farmer will have the produce of his farm as much as a free tenant; but he will pay no dividends to the Companions who are *not* farmers.

The landlords will in general be men of independent fortune, who, having gifts and ingenuity, choose to devote such gifts to the service of the Society; the first condition of their appointment to a lordship will be that they can work as much better than their labourers at all rural labour as a good knight was wont to be a better workman than his soldiers in war. There is no rule of supremacy that can ever supersede this eternal, natural, and divine one. Higher by the head, broader in the shoulders, and heartier in the will, the lord of lands and lives must for ever be, than those he rules, and must work daily at their head, as Richard at the trenches of Acre.

And what am I, myself then, infirm and old, who take, or claim, leadership even of these lords? God forbid that I should claim it; it is thrust and compelled on me—utterly against my will, utterly to my distress, utterly, in many things, to my shame. But I have found no other man in England, none in Europe, ready to receive it,—or even desiring to make himself capable of receiving it. Such as I am, to my own amazement, I stand—so far as I can discern—alone in conviction, in hope, and in resolution, in the wilderness of this modern world. Bred in luxury, which I perceive to have been unjust to others, and destructive to myself; vacillating, foolish, and miserably failing in all my own conduct in life—and blown about hopelessly by storms of passion—I, a man clothed in soft raiment,—I, a reed shaken with the wind, have yet this Message

to all men again entrusted to me : " Behold, the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Whatsoever tree therefore bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire."

This message, yet once more ; and, more than message, the beginning of the acts that must fulfil it. For, long since, I have said all that needs to be said,—all that it was my proper charge and duty to say. In the one volume of 'Sesame and Lilies'—nay, in the last forty pages of its central address to Englishwomen—everything is told that I know of vital truth, everything urged that I see to be needful of vital act ;—but no creature answers me with any faith or any deed. They read the words, and say they are pretty, and go on in their own ways. And the day has come for me therefore to cease speaking, and begin doing, as best I may ; though I know not whether shall prosper, either this or that.

And truly to all wholesome deed here in England, the chances of prosperity are few, and the distinctness of adversity only conquerable by fixed imagination and exhaustless patience—'Adversis rerum immersabilis undis.' The wisest men join with the fools, and the best men with the villains, to prevent, if they may, any good thing being done permanently—nay, to provoke and applaud the doing of consistently evil things permanently. To establish a National debt, and in the most legal terms—how easy ! To establish a National storé, under any legal or moral conditions of perpetuity—how

difficult! Every one calls me mad for so much as hoping to do so. 'This looks like a charity, this educating of peasants,' said the good lawyer, who drew up the conditional form of association. 'You must not establish a fund for charity; it is sure to lead to all sorts of abuses, and get into wrong hands.'

Well, yes—it in merely human probability may. I do verily perceive and admit, in convinced sorrow, that I live in the midst of a nation of thieves and murderers; that everybody round me is trying to rob everybody else; and that, not bravely and strongly, but in the most cowardly and loathsome ways of lying trade; that 'Englishman' is now merely another word for blackleg and swindler; and English honour and courtesy changed to the sneaking and the smiles of a whipped pedlar, an inarticulate Autolycus, with a steam hurdy-gurdy instead of a voice. Be this all so; be it so to the heart's content—or liver and gall's content—of every modern economist and philosopher. I yet do verily trust that out of this festering mass of scum of the earth, and miserable coagulation of frog-spawn soaked in ditch-water, I can here and there pluck up some drowned honour by the locks, and leave written orders for wholesome deed, and collected moneys for the doing thereof, which will be obeyed and guarded after I am gone; and will by no means fall into the power of the mendicant tribe who, too cowardly and heartless to beg from the face of the living, steal the alms of the dead, and

unite the apparently inconsistent characters of beggar and thief, seasoning the compound with sacrilege.

Little by little, if my life is spared to me, therefore (and if I die, there will I doubt not be raised up some one else in my room)—little by little, I or they, will get moneys and lands together; handful gleaned after handful; field joined to field, and landmarks set which no man shall dare hereafter remove. And over those fields of ours the winds of Heaven shall be pure; and upon them, the work of men shall be done in honour and truth.

In such vague promise, I have for the most part hitherto spoken, not because my own plans were unfixed, but because I knew they would only be mocked at, until by some years of persistence the scheme had run the course of the public talk, and until I had publicly challenged the denial of its principles in their abstract statement, long enough to show them to be invincible. Of these abstract principles, the fifteenth, sixteenth, twentieth, twenty-second and twenty-third letters in *Time and Tide*, express all that is needful; only, in the years that have passed since they were written, the 'difficulties' stated in the seventeenth chapter have been under constant review by me; and of the ways in which I mean to deal with them it is now time to speak.

Let us understand then, in the outset, the moral difference between a national debt and a national store.

A national debt, like any other, may be honestly incurred in case of need, and honestly paid in due time. But if a man should be ashamed to borrow, much more should a people: and if a father holds it his honour to provide for his children, and would be ashamed to borrow from them, and leave, with his blessing, his note of hand, for his grandchildren to pay, much more should a nation be ashamed to borrow, in any case, or in any manner; and if it borrow at all, it is at least in honour bound to borrow from living men, and not indebt itself to its own unborn brats. If it can't provide for them, at least let it not send their cradles to the pawnbroker, and pick the pockets of their first breeches.

A national debt, then, is a foul disgrace, at the best. But it is, as now constituted, also a foul crime. National debts paying interest are simply the purchase, by the rich, of power to tax the poor. Read carefully the analysis given of them above, Letter VIII., p. 149.

The financial operations of the St. George's Company will be the direct reverse of these hitherto approved arrangements. They will consist in the accumulation of national wealth and store, and therefore in distribution to the poor, instead of taxation of them; and the fathers will provide for, and nobly endow, not steal from, their children, and children's children.

My readers, however, will even yet, I am well aware, however often I have reiterated the statement to them, be unable to grasp the idea of a National

Store, as an existing possession. They can conceive nothing but a debt ;—nay, there are many of them who have a confused notion that a debt *is* a store !

The store of the St. George's Company, then, is to be primarily of food ; next of materials for clothing and covert ; next of books and works of art,—food, clothes, books, and works of art being all good, and every poisonous condition of any of them destroyed. The food will not be purveyed by the Borgia, nor the clothing dyed by Deianira, nor the scriptures written under dictation of the Devil instead of God.

The most simply measurable part of the store of food and clothing will be the basis of the currency, which will be thus constituted.

The standard of value will be a given weight or measure of grain, wine, wool, silk, flax, wood, and marble ; all answered for by the government as of fine and pure quality, variable only within narrow limits.

The grain will be either wheat, oats, barley, rice, or maize ; the wine of pure vintage, and not less than ten years old ;* the wool, silk, and flax of such standard as can be secured in constancy ; the wood, seasoned oak and pine ; and for fuel in log and faggot, with finest wood and marble for sculpture. The penny's worth, florin's worth, ducat's worth, and hundred ducats' worth of each of these articles

* Thus excluding all inferior kinds : wine which will keep ten years will keep fifty.

will be a given weight or measure of them, (the penny roll of our present breakfast table furnishing some notion of what, practically, the grain standard will become). Into the question of equivalent value I do not enter here; it will be at once determined practically as soon as the system is in work. Of these articles the government will always have in its possession as much as may meet the entire demand of its currency in circulation. That is to say, when it has a million in circulation, the million's worth of solid property must be in its storehouses: as much more as it can gather, of course; but never less. So that, not only, for his penny, florin, ducat, or hundred-ducat note, a man may always be certain of having his pound, or ton, or pint, or cask, of the thing he chooses to ask for, from the government storehouses, but if the holders of the million of currency came in one day to ask for their money's worth, it would be found ready for them in one or other form of those substantial articles. Consequently, the sum of the circulating currency being known, the minimum quantity of store will be known. The sum of the entire currency, in and out of circulation, will be given annually on every note issued (no issues of currency being made but on the first day of the year), and in each district, every morning, the quantities of the currency in and out of circulation in that district will be placarded at the doors of the government district bank.

The metallic currency will be of absolutely pure gold and silver, and of those metals only; the ducat

and half-ducat in gold, the florin, penny, halfpenny, and one-fifth of penny in silver; the smaller coins being beat thin and pierced, the halfpenny with two, the one-fifth of penny with five, apertures.* I believe this double-centime will be as fine a divisor as I shall need. The florin will be worth tenpence; the ducat, twenty florins.

The weight of the ducat will be a little greater than that of the standard English sovereign, and, being in absolutely pure gold, it will be worth at least five-and-twenty shillings of our present coinage. On one of its sides it will bear the figure of the archangel Michael; on the reverse, a branch of Alpine rose: above the rose-branch, the words 'Sit splendor';† above the Michael, 'Fiat voluntas'; under the rose-branch, 'sicut in cœlo'; under the Michael, 'et in terrâ,' with the year of the coinage: and round the edge of the coin, 'Domini.'

The half-ducat will bear the same stamp, except that while on the ducat the St. Michael will be represented standing on the dragon, on the half-ducat he will be simply armed, and bearing St. George's shield.

* I shall use this delicate coinage as a means of education in fineness of touch, and care of small things, and for practical lessons in arithmetic, to the younger children, in whose hands it will principally be. It will never be wanted for alms; and for small purchases, as no wares will be offered at elevenpence three-farthings for a shilling, or ninepence four-fifths for a florin, there will be no unreasonable trouble. The children shall buy their own toys, and have none till they are able to do so.

† The beginning of the last verse of the prayer of Moses, Psalm xc.

On the florin, the St. George's shield only; the Alpine rose on all three.

On the penny, St. George's shield on one side and the English daisy on the other, without inscription. The pierced fractional coins will only bear a chased wreathen fillet, with the required apertures in its interstices.

There will be a considerable loss by wear on a coinage of this pure metal; but nothing is so materially conducive to the honour of a state in all financial function as the purity of its coinage; and the loss will never, on the whole currency, equal annually the tenth part of the value of the gunpowder spent at present in salutes or fireworks; and, if a nation can afford to pay for loyal noise, and fancies in fire, it may also, and much more rationally, for loyal truth and beauty in its circulating signs of wealth. Nor do I doubt that a currency thus constituted will gradually enter into European commerce, and become everywhere recognised and exemplary.

Supposing any Continental extension of the Company itself took place, its coinage would remain the same for the ducat, but the shield of the State or Province would be substituted for St. George's on the minor coins.

There will be no ultimate difficulty in obtaining the bullion necessary for this coinage, for the State will have no use for the precious metals, except for its currency or its art. An Englishman, as he is at present educated, takes pride in eating

out of a silver plate ; and in helping, out of a silver tureen, the richest swindlers he can ask to dinner. The Companions of St. George may drink out of pewter, and eat off delft, but they will have no knaves for guests, though often beggars ; and they will be always perfectly well able to afford to buy five or ten pounds' worth of gold and silver for their pocket change ; and even think it no overwhelming fiscal calamity if as much even as ten shillings should be actually lost in the year, by the wear of it ; seeing that the wear of their dinner napkins will be considerably greater in the same time. I suppose that ten pounds' worth of bullion for the head of each family will amply supply the necessary quantity for circulation ; but if it should be found convenient to have fifteen—twenty—or fifty pounds in such form, the national store will assuredly in time accumulate to such desirable level. But it will always be a matter of absolute financial indifference, what part of the currency is in gold and what in paper ; its power being simply that of a government receipt for goods received, giving claim to their return on demand. The holder of the receipt may have it, if he likes, written on gold instead of paper, provided he bring the gold for it to be written on ; but he may no more have a bar of gold made into money than a roll of foolscap, unless he brings the goods for which the currency is the receipt. And it will therefore, by St. George's law, be as much forgery to imitate the national coin in gold, as in paper.

Next to this store, which is the basis of its currency, the government will attend to the increase of store of animal food—not mummy food, in tins, but living, on land and sea ; keeping under strictest overseership its breeders of cattle, and fishermen, and having always at its command such supply of animal food as may enable it to secure absolute consistency of price in the main markets. In cases when, by any disease or accident, the supply of any given animal food becomes difficult, its price will not be raised; but its sale stopped. There can be no evasion of such prohibition, because every tradesman in food will be merely the salaried servant of the Company, and there will be no temptation to it, because his salary will be the same, whether he sells or not. Of all articles of general consumption, the government will furnish its own priced standard ; any man will be allowed to sell what he can produce above that standard, at what price he can get for it ; but all goods below the government standard will be marked and priced as of such inferior quality ;—and all bad food, cloth, or other article of service, destroyed. And the supervision will be rendered simple by the fewness of the articles permitted to be sold at all ; for the dress being in all classes as determined as the heraldry of coronets, and for the most part also rigorously simple ; and all luxurious living disgraceful, the entire means of domestic life will be within easy definition.

Of course the idea of regulating dress generally

will be looked upon by the existing British public as ridiculous. But it has become ridiculous because masters and mistresses attempt it solely for their own pride. Even with that entirely selfish end, the natural instinct of human creatures for obedience, when in any wholesome relations with their superiors, has enabled the masters to powder their coachmen's wigs, and polish their footmen's legs with silk stockings; and the mistresses to limit their lady's maids, when in attendance, to certain styles of cap.

Now as the dress regulations of the St. George's Company will be quite as much for the pride of the maid as the mistress, and of the man as the master, I have no fear but they will be found acceptable, and require no strictness of enforcement. The children of peasants, though able to maintain their own families, will be required to be as clean as if they were charity-boys or girls; nobody will be allowed to wear the cast clothes of other people, to sell or pawn their own, or to appear on duty, agricultural or whatever other it may be, in rags, any more than the Horse Guards or the Queen's dairymaids are now; also on certain occasions, and within such limits as are needful for good fellowship, they will be urged to as much various splendour as they can contrive. The wealth of the peasant women will be chiefly in hereditary golden ornaments of the finest workmanship; and in jewellery of uncut gems,—agates only, or other stones of magnitude, being allowed to be cut, and gems of large size, which are

worth the pains, for their beauty ; but these will be chiefly used in decorative architecture or furniture, not in dress. The dress of the officers of the Company will be on all occasions plainer than that of its peasants ; but hereditary nobles will retain all the insignia of their rank, the one only condition of change required on their entering the St. George's Company being the use of uncut jewels, and therefore—seldom of diamonds.*

The next main staple of the Company's store will be its literature.

A chosen series of classical books will be placed in every village library, in number of copies enough to supply all readers ; these classics will be perfectly printed and perfectly bound, and all in one size of volume, unless where engravings need larger space : besides these village libraries, there will be a museum in every district, containing all good ancient books obtainable : gradually, as the design expands itself, and as time passes on, absorbing, by gift, or purchase, the contents of private libraries, and connecting themselves with similarly expanding museums of natural history. In all schools, the books necessary for their work will be given to the pupils ; and one of their earliest lessons will be the keeping of them clean and orderly.

By ordering of Fors, I went only this last

* I never saw a rough diamond worth setting, until the Bishop of Natal gave me a sharply crystallized one from the African fields. Perhaps a star or two of cut ones may be permitted to the house-mistresses on great occasions.

month to see the school in which Wordsworth was educated. It remains, as it was then, a school for peasant lads only; and the doors of its little library, therefore, hang loose on their decayed hinges; and one side of the schoolroom is utterly dark—the window on that side having been long ago walled up, either ‘because of the window-tax, or perhaps it had got broken,’ suggested the guardian of the place.

Now it is true that this state of things cannot last long; but the cure will be worse than the disease. A fit of reactionary vanity and folly is sure to seize the village authorities; that old schoolroom, with its sacred associations, will be swept from the hillside, and a grand piece of Birmingham Gothic put up, with a master from Kensington, and enforced weekly competitive examination in Sanscrit, and the Binomial Theorem.

All that the school wants is, hinges to its library doors as good as every shop in the street has to its shutters; the window knocked through again where it was originally; the books whose bindings are worn out, rebound, and a few given (in addition to those on the subjects of arithmetic and grammar), which the boys may rather ask leave to read, than take opportunity to throw into corners.

But the ten or twenty pounds needed for this simple reformation could, I suppose, at present, by no persuasion nor argument be extracted from the united pockets of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood. Meantime, while the library doors flap

useless on their hinges, the old country churchyard is grim with parallelograms of iron palisade, enforced partly to get some sacred market for the wares of the rich ironmongers who are buying up the country; and partly to protect their valuable carcasses in their putrefying pride. Of such iron stores the men of St. George's Company, dead, will need none, and living, permit none. But they will strictly enforce the proper complement of hinges to their school-library doors.

The resuscitation of the, at present extinct, art of writing being insisted upon in the school exercises of the higher classes, the libraries will be gradually enriched with manuscripts of extreme preciousness. A well-written book is as much pleasanter and more beautiful than a printed one as a picture is than an engraving; and there are * many forms of the art of illumination which were only in their infancy at the time when the wooden blocks of Germany abolished the art of scripture, and of which the revival will be a necessary result of a proper study of natural history.

In next Fors, I shall occupy myself wholly with the subject of our Art education and property, and in that for December, I hope to publish the legal form of our constitution revised and complete. The terminal clauses respecting the Companions' right of possession in the lands will be found modified, or in great part omitted, in the recast deed; but I am neither careful nor fearful respecting the terms of this instrument, which is to

be regarded merely as a mechanical means of presently getting to work and having land legally secured to us. The ultimate success or failure of the design will not in the least depend on the terms of our constitution, but on the quantity of living honesty and pity which can be found, to be constituted. If there is not material enough out of which to choose Companions, or energy enough in the Companions chosen to fill the chain-mail of all terms and forms with living power, the scheme will be choked by its first practical difficulties; and it matters little what becomes of the very small property its promoters are ever likely to handle. If, on the contrary, as I believe, there be yet honesty and sense enough left in England to nourish the effort, from its narrow source there will soon develop itself a vast Policy, of which neither I nor any one else can foresee the issue, far less verbally or legally limit it; but in which, broadly, by the carrying out of the primally accepted laws of Obedience and Economy, the Master and Marshals will become the Ministry of the State, answerable for the employment of its revenues, for its relations with external powers, and for such change of its laws as from time to time may be found needful: the Landlords will be the resident administrators of its lands, and immediate directors of all labour,—its captains in war, and magistrates in peace: the tenants will constitute its agricultural and military force, having such domestic and acquisitive independence as may

be consistent with patriotic and kindly fellowship: and the artists, schoolmen, tradesmen, and inferior labourers, will form a body of honourably paid retainers, undisturbed in their duty by any chance or care relating to their means of subsistence.

LETTER LIX

SCHOOL BOOKS

HERNE HILL, 3rd October, 1875.

THE day before yesterday I went with a young English girl to see her nurse; who was sick of a lingering illness during which, with kindest intent, and sufficient success, (as she told me,) in pleasing her, books had been chosen for her from the circulating library, by those of her pious friends whose age and experience qualified them for such task.

One of these volumes chancing to lie on the table near me, I looked into it, and found it to be 'Stepping Heavenward;'—as far as I could make out, a somewhat long, but not unintelligent, sermon on the text of Wordsworth's 'Stepping Westward.' In the five minutes during which I strayed between the leaves of it, and left the talk of my friend with her nurse to its own liberty, I found that the first chapters described the conversion of an idle and careless young lady of sixteen to a solemn view of her duties in life, which she thus expresses at the end of an advanced chapter: "I am resolved never to read worldly books any more ;

and my music and drawing I have laid aside for ever."*

The spiritually walled cloister to which this charming child of modern enlightenment thus expresses her determination to retire, differs, it would appear, from the materially walled monastic shades of the Dark Ages, first, by the breadth and magnanimity of an Index Expurgatorius rising to interdiction of all uninspired books whatever, except Baxter's 'Saint's Rest,' and other classics of evangelical theology; and, secondly, by its holy abhorrence of the arts of picture and song, which waste so much precious time, and give so much disagreeable trouble to learn; and which also, when learned, are too likely to be used in the service of idols; while the skills which our modern gospel substitutes for both, of steam-whistle, namely, and photograph, supply, with all that they need of terrestrial pleasure, the ears which God has redeemed from spiritual deafness, and the eyes which He has turned from darkness to light.

My readers are already, I hope, well enough acquainted with the Institutes of the St. George's Company to fear no monastic restrictions of enjoyment, nor imperative choice of their books, carried to this celestially Utopian strictness. And yet,

* I quote from memory, and may be out in a word or two; not in the sense: but I don't know if the young lady is really approved by the author, and held up as an example to others; or meant as I have taken her, for a warning. The method of error, at all events, is accurately and clearly shown.

understanding the terms of the sentence with true and scholarly accuracy, I must, in educational legislation, insist on the daughters of my Companions fulfilling this resolution to the letter: "I am resolved never to read worldly books any more, and *my* music and drawing I have laid aside for ever."

"Worldly books"? Yes; very certainly, when you know which they are; for I will have you to abjure, with World, Flesh, and Devil, the literature of all the three:—and *your* music and drawing,—that is to say, all music and drawing which you have learned only for your own glory or amusement, and respecting which you have no idea that it may ever become, in a far truer sense, other people's music and drawing.

For all the arts of mankind, and womankind, are only rightly learned, or practised, when they are so with the definite purpose of pleasing or teaching others. A child dancing for its own delight,—a lamb leaping,—or a fawn at play, are happy and holy creatures; but they are not artists. An artist is—and recollect this definition, (put in capitals for quick reference,)—A PERSON WHO HAS SUBMITTED TO A LAW WHICH IT WAS PAINFUL TO OBEY, THAT HE MAY BESTOW A DELIGHT WHICH IT IS GRACIOUS TO BESTOW.*

"A painful law," I say; yet full of pain, not in

* To make the definition by itself complete, the words 'in his work' should be added after 'submitted' and 'by his work' after 'bestow'; but it is easier to learn, without these phrases, which are of course to be understood.

the sense of torture, but of stringency, or constraint; and labour, increasing, it may be, sometimes into aching of limbs, and panting of breasts: but these stronger yet, for every ache, and broader for every pant; and farther and farther strengthened from danger of rheumatic ache, and consumptive pant.

This, so far as the Arts are concerned, is 'entering in at the Strait gate,' of which entrance, and its porter's lodge, you will find farther account given in my fourth "Morning in Florence," which I should like you to read, as a preparation for the work more explicitly now to be directed under St. George. The immediate gist of it, for those who do not care to read of Florence, I must be irksome enough again to give here; namely, that the word Strait, applied to the entrance into Life, and the word Narrow, applied to the road of Life, do not mean that the road is so fenced that few can travel it, however much they wish, (like the entrance to the pit of a theatre,)* but that, for each person, it is at first so stringent, so difficult, and so dull, being between close hedges, that few *will* enter it, though all *may*. In a second sense, and an equally vital one, it is not merely a Strait, or narrow, but a straight, or right road; only, in this rightness of it, not at all traced by hedges, wall, or telegraph wire, or even marked by posts

* The 'few there be that find it' is added, as an actual fact; a fact consequent not on the way's being narrow, but on its being disagreeable.

higher than winter's snow; but, on the contrary, often difficult to trace among morasses and mounds of desert, even by skilful sight; and by blind persons, entirely untenable unless by help of a guide, director, rector, or rex: which you may conjecture to be the reason why, when St. Paul's eyes were to be opened, out of the darkness which meant only the consciousness of utter mistake, to seeing what way he should go, his director was ordered to come to him in the "street which is called Straight."

Now, bringing these universal and eternal facts down to this narrow, straight, and present piece of business we have in hand, the first thing we have to learn to draw is an extremely narrow, and an extremely direct, line. Only, observe, true and vital direction does not mean that, without any deflection or warp by antagonist force, we can fly, or walk, or creep at once to our mark; but that, whatever the antagonist force may be, we so know and mean our mark, that we shall at last precisely arrive at it, just as surely, and it may be in some cases more quickly, than if we had been unaffected by lateral or opposing force. And this higher order of contending and victorious rightness, which in our present business is best represented by the track of an arrow, or rifle-shot, affected in its course both by gravity and the wind, is the more beautiful rightness or directness of the two, and the one which all fine art sets itself principally to achieve. But its quite first step must nevertheless be in the

simple production of the mathematical Right line, as far as the hand can draw it; joining two points, that is to say, with a straight visible track, which shall as nearly as possible fulfil the mathematical definition of a line, "length without breadth."

And the two points had better at first be placed at the small distance of an inch from each other, both because it is easy to draw so short a line, and because it is well for us to know, early in life, the look of the length of an inch. And when we have learned the look of our own English inch, we will proceed to learn the look of that which will probably be our currency measure of length, the French inch, for that is a better standard than ours, for European acceptance.

Here, I had made arrangements for the production of a plate, and woodcut, to illustrate the first steps of elementary design; but the black-plague of cloud already more than once spoken of (as connected probably with the diminution of snow on the Alps), has rendered it impossible for my assistants to finish their work in time. This disappointment I accept thankfully as the ordinance of my careful and prudent mistress, Atropos,—the third Fors; and am indeed quickly enough apprehensive of her lesson in it. She wishes me, I doubt not, to recognize that I was foolish in designing the intrusion of technical advice into my political letters; and to understand that the giving of clear and separate directions for elementary art-practice is now an imperative duty for me, and that these

art-lessons must be in companionship with my other school books on the Earth and its Flowers.

I must needs do her bidding ; and as I gather my past work on rocks and plants together, so I must, day by day, gather what I now know to be right of my past work on art together ; and, not in sudden thought, but in the resumption of purpose which I humbly and sincerely entreat my mistress to pardon me for having abandoned under pressure of extreme fatigue, I will publish, in the same form as the geology and botany, what I desire to ratify, and fasten with nails in a sure place, with instant applicability to school and university exercises, of my former writings on art.*

But this, I beg my readers to observe, will be the seventh large book I have actually at this time passing through the press ; † besides having written and published four volumes of university lectures ‡ in the last six years ; every word of them weighed

* Namely, *Modern Painters*, *Stones of Venice*, *Seven Lamps*, and *Elements of Drawing*. I cut these books to pieces, because in the three first, all the religious notions are narrow, and many false ; and in the fourth, there is a vital mistake about outline, doing great damage to all the rest.

† Fors, *Ariadne*, *Love's Meinie*, *Proserpina*, *Deucalion*, *Mornings in Florence*,—and this : and four of these require the careful preparation of drawings for them by my own hand, and one of these drawings alone, for *Proserpina*, this last June, took me a good ten days' work, and that hard.

‡ *Inaugural Lectures*, *Aratra Pentelici*, *Val d'Arno*, and *Eagle's Nest* ; besides a course on *Florentine sculpture*, given last year, and not yet printed, the substance of it being in re-modification for *Mornings in Florence*.

with care. This is what I observe the *Daily Telegraph* calls giving 'utterances few and far between.' But it is as much certainly as I am able at present to manage; and I must beg my correspondents, therefore, to have generally patience with me when I don't answer their letters by return of post; and above all things, to write them clear, and in a round hand, with all the *ms* and *ns* well distinguished from *us*.

The woodcut, indeed, prepared for this Fors was to have been a lesson in writing; but that must wait till next year, now; meantime you may best prepare yourself for that, and all other lessons to be given in my new edition of the Elements of Drawing, by beginning to form your own cherished and orderly treasures of beautiful art. For although the greatest treasury in that kind, belonging to St. George's Company, will be as often aforesaid public property, in our museums, every householder of any standing whatever among us will also have his own domestic treasury, becoming hereditary as accumulative; and accurately catalogued, so that others may know what peculiar or separate good things are to be found in his house, and have graciously permitted use of them if true necessity be.

The basis, however, of such domestic treasury will of course be common to all; every household having its proper books for religious and economic service, and its classic authors, and engravings.

With the last we must at present class, and largely use, the more perishable treasure of good

photographs; these, however, I do not doubt but that modern science will succeed, (if it has not already done so,) in rendering permanent; and, at all events, permanent copies of many may soon be placed in all our schools. Of such domestic treasure we will begin with a photograph of the picture by Fra Filippo Lippi, representing the Madonna; which picture last year had its place over the door of the inner room of the Uffizii of Florence, beyond the Tribune. This photograph can of course eventually be procured in any numbers; and, assuming that my readers will get one, I shall endeavour in this and future numbers of Fors, to make it useful to them and therefore a treasure.*

The first thing you are to observe in it is that the figures are represented as projecting in front of a frame or window-sill. The picture belongs, therefore, to the class meant to be, as far as possible, deceptively like reality; and is in this respect entirely companionable with one long known in our picture-shops, and greatly popular with the British innkeeper, of a smuggler on the look-out, with his hand and pistol projecting over the window-sill. The only differences in purpose between the painter of this Anglican subject and the Florentine's, are, first, that the Florentine wishes to give the impression, not of a smuggler's being in the same room

* Mr. W. Ward, Bedford Chambers, 28 Southampton Street, Strand, London, W C., will give any necessary information about this or other photographs referred to in Fors; and generally have them on sale.

with you, but of the Virgin and Child's being so; and, secondly, that in this representation he wishes not *merely* to attain deceptive reality; but to concentrate all the skill and thought that his hand and mind possess, in making that reality noble.

Next, you are to observe that with this unusually positive realism of representation, there is also an unusually mystic spiritualism of conception. Nearly all the Madonnas, even of the most strictly devotional schools, themselves support the child, either on their knees or in their arms. But here, the Christ is miraculously borne by angels;—the Madonna, though seated on her throne, worships with both hands lifted.

Thirdly, you will at first be pained by the decision of line, and, in the children at least, uncomeliness of feature, which are characteristic, the first, of purely descended Etruscan work; the second, of the Florentine school headed afterwards by Donatello. But it is absolutely necessary, for right progress in knowledge, that you begin by observing and tracing decisive lines; and that you consider dignity and simplicity of expression more than beauty of feature. Remember also that a photograph necessarily loses the most subtle beauty of all things, because it cannot represent blue or grey colours,* and darkens red ones; so that all glowing and warm shadows become too dark. Be assured, nevertheless, that

* The transparent part of the veil which descends from the point of the cap is entirely lost, for instance, in the Madonna.

you have in this photograph, imperfect as it is, a most precious shadow and image of one of the greatest works ever produced by hand of man : and begin the study of it piece by piece. If you fancy yourself able to draw at all, you may begin by practice over and over again of the little angular band on the forehead, with its studs, and the connected chain of pearls. There are seven pearls and fourteen studs ; the fifteenth, a little larger, at the angle of the transparent cap ; and four more, retiring. They are to be drawn with a fine brush and sepia, measuring the exact length of the band first ; then marking its double curve, depressed in the centre, and rising over the hair, and then the studs and pearls in their various magnitudes. If you can't manage these, try the spiral of the chair ; if not that, buy a penny's worth of marbles and draw them in a row, and pick up a snail shell, and meditate upon it, if you have any time for meditation. And in my Christmas Fors I will tell you something about marbles, and beads, and coral, and pearls, and shells ; and in time—it is quite possible—you may be able to draw a boy's marble and a snail's shell ; and a sea urchin ; and a Doric capital ; and an Ionic capital ; and a Parthenon, and a Virgin in it ; and a Solomon's Temple, and a Spirit of Wisdom in it ; and a Nehemiah's Temple, and a Madonna in it.

This photograph, then, is to be our first domestic possession in works of art ; if any difficulty or improper cost occur in attaining it, I will name

another to answer its purpose ; but this will be No. 1 in our household catalogue of reference : which will never be altered, so that the pieces may always be referred to merely by their numbers.

Of public, or museum property in art, I have this month laid also the minute foundation, by the purchase, for our schools, of the engravings named in the annexed printseller's account.*

And respecting the general operation of these schools and of the museums connected with them, the conclusion, which I am happy to announce, of the purchase of a piece of ground for the first of them, for six hundred pounds, requires some small special commentary.

Of such science, art, and literature as are properly connected with husbandry, St. George primarily acknowledges the art which provides him with a ploughshare,—and if need still be for those more savage instruments,—with spear, sword, and armour.

Therefore, it is fitting that of his schools “for the workmen and labourers of England,” the first should be placed in Sheffield ; (I suppose, originally Sheaf-field ; but do not at all rest on that etymology, having had no time to inquire into it.)

* Apollo and the Python, Raglan, Solway Moss, Hind Head, Falls of the Clyde (three impressions), Hindoo Worship, Dunblane Abbey, etching of Severn and Wye, Tenth Plague and Hesperie ; —£29, 10s. in all the printseller obligingly giving an eleventh, “Pembury Mill,”—Fors thus directing that the first art gift bestowed on the Company shall be Turner's etching of a flour mill.

Besides this merely systematic and poetical fitness, there is the farther practical reason for our first action being among this order of craftsmen in England; that in cutler's ironwork, we have, at this actual epoch of our history, the best in its kind done by English hands, unsurpassable, I presume, when the workman chooses to do all he knows, by that of any living nation.

For these two principal reasons, (and not without further direction from Fors of a very distinct nature,) I expressed, some time since, my purpose to place the first museum of the St. George's Company at Sheffield.

Whereupon, I received a letter, very well and kindly meant, from Mr. Bragge, offering me space in the exisiting Sheffield museum for whatever I chose to put there: Mr. Bragge very naturally supposing that this would be the simplest mode of operation for me; and the most immediately advantageous to the town. To that (as I supposed private) communication I replied, in what I meant to be a private letter; which letter Mr. Bragge, without asking my permission, read at a public dinner, with public comment on what he imagined to be the state of my health.

Now, I never wrote a letter in my life which all the world are not welcome to read, if they will: and as Fors would have it so, I am glad this letter *was* read aloud, and widely circulated: only, I beg Mr. Bragge and the other gentlemen who have kindly interested themselves in the existing Sheffield

museum to understand that, had I intended the letter for publicity, it would have been couched in more courteous terms, and extended into clearer explanation of my singular and apparently perverse conduct in what I observe the Sheffield press, since it has had possession of the letter in question, characterizes as "setting up an opposition museum at Walkley."

I am glad to find the Sheffield branch of English journalism reprobating, in one instance at least, the—I had imagined now by all acclamation, divine—principle of Competition. But surely, the very retirement to the solitude of Walkley of which the same journalist complains, might have vindicated St. George's first quiet effort in his own work, from this unexpected accusation,—especially since, in so far as I can assert or understand the objects of either of the supposedly antagonist showmen, neither Mr. Bragge nor St. George intend taking shillings at the doors.

Nevertheless, the impression on the mind of the Sheffield journalist that museums are to be opened as lively places of entertainment, rivals for public patronage, and that their most proper position is therefore in a public thoroughfare, deserves on St. George's part some careful answer. A museum is, be it first observed, primarily, not at all a place of entertainment, but a place of Education. And a museum is, be it secondly observed, not a place for elementary education, but for that of already far-advanced scholars. And it is by no means

the same thing as a parish school, or a Sunday school, or a day school, or even—the Brighton Aquarium.

Be it observed, in the third place, that the word 'School' means 'Leisure,' and that the word 'Museum' means 'Belonging to the Muses;' and that all schools and museum whatsoever, can only be, what they claim to be, and ought to be, places of noble instruction, when the persons who have a mind to use them can obtain so much relief from the work, or exert so much abstinence from the dissipation, of the outside world, as may enable them to devote a certain portion of secluded laborious and reverent life to the attainment of the Divine Wisdom, which the Greeks supposed to be the gift of Apollo, or of the Sun; and which the Christian knows to be the gift of Christ. Now, I hear it continually alleged against me, when I advocate the raising of working men's wages, that already many of them have wages so high that they work only three days a week, and spend the other three days in drinking. And I have not the least doubt that under St. George's rule, when none but useful work is done, and when all classes are compelled to share in it, wages may indeed be so high, or, which amounts to the same thing as far as our present object is concerned, time so short, that at least two, if not three days out of every week, (or an equivalent portion of time taken out of each day,) may be devoted by some British workmen—no more to the alehouse, but to, what British clergymen ought to mean, if they don't, by

the 'concerns of their immortal souls,' that is to say, to the contemplation and study of the works of God, and the learning that complete code of natural history which, beginning with the life and death of the Hyssop on the wall, rises to the knowledge of the life and death of the recorded generations of mankind, and of the visible starry Dynasties of Heaven.

The workmen who have leisure to enter on this course of study will also, I believe, have leisure to walk to Walkley. The museum has been set there, not by me, but by the second Fors, (Lachesis,) on the top of a high and steep hill,—with only my most admiring concurrence in her apparent intention that the approach to it may be at once symbolically instructive, and practically sanitary.

LETTER LX

STARS IN THE EAST

COWLEY RECTORY,

27th October, 1875.

My Christmas letter this year, since we are now definitely begun with our schooling, may most fitly be on the subject, already opened in Letter XII., of the Three Wise Men.

'Three wise men of Gotham,' I had nearly written ; the remembrance of the very worst pantomime I ever saw, having, from the mere intolerableness of its stupidity, so fastened itself in my memory that I can't now get rid of the ring in my ears, unless I carefully say, 'Magi,' instead of 'wise men.'

Such, practically, is the principal effect of the Sacred Art employed by England, in the festivity of her God's birthday, upon the minds of her innocent children, like me, who would fain see something magical and pretty on the occasion—if the good angels would bring it us, and our nurses, and mammas, and governesses would allow us to believe in magic, or in wisdom, any more.

You would not believe, if they wanted you, I suppose, you wise men of the west ? You are sure that no real magicians ever existed ; no real witches —no real prophets ;—that an Egyptian necromancer

was only a clever little Mr. Faraday, given to juggling; and the witch of Endor, only a Jewish Mrs. Somerville amusing herself with a practical joke on Saul; and that when Elisha made the axe swim, he had prepared the handle on the sly—with aluminium? And you think that in this blessed nineteenth century—though there isn't a merchant, from Dan to Beersheba, too honest to cheat, there is not a priest nor a prophet, from Dan to Beersheba, but he is too dull to juggle?

You may think, for what I care, what you please in such matters, if indeed you choose to go on through all your lives thinking, instead of ascertaining. But, for my own part, there are a few things concerning Magi and their doings which I have personally discovered, by laborious work among real magi. Some of those things I am going to tell you to-day, positively, and with entire and incontrovertible knowledge of them,—as you and your children will one day find every word of my direct statements in 'Fors Clavigera' to be; and fastened, each with its nail in its sure place.

A. In the first place, then, concerning stars in the east. You can't see the loveliest which appear there naturally,—the Morning Star, namely, and his fellows,—unless you get up in the morning.

B. If you resolve thus always, so far as may be in your own power, to see the loveliest which are there naturally, you will soon come to see them in a supernatural manner, with a quite—properly so-called—'miraculous' or 'wonderful' light which

will be a light in your spirit, not in your eyes. And you will hear, with your spirit, the Morning Star and his fellows sing together; also, you will hear the sons of God shouting together for joy with them; particularly the little ones, —sparrows, greenfinches, linnets, and the like.

C. You will, by persevering in the practice, gradually discover that it is a pleasant thing to see stars in the luminous east; to watch them fade as they rise; to hear their Master say, Let there be light—and there is light; to see the world made, that day, at the word; and creation, instant by instant, of divine forms out of darkness.

D. At six o'clock, or some approximate hour, you will perceive with precision that the Firm over the way, or round the corner, of the United Grand Steam Percussion and Corrosion Company, Limited, (Offices, London, Paris, and New York,) issues its counter-order, Let there be darkness; and that the Master of Creation not only at once submits to this order, by fulfilling the constant laws He has ordained concerning smoke,—but farther, supernaturally or miraculously, enforces the order by sending a poisonous black wind, also from the east, of an entirely corrosive, deadly, and horrible quality, with which, from him that hath not, He takes away also that light he hath; and changes the sky during what remains of the day,—on the average now three days out of five,*—into a mere dome of ashes,

* It is at this moment, nine o'clock, 27th October, tearing the Virginian creeper round my window into rags rather than leaves.

differing only by their enduring frown and slow pestilence from the passing darkness and showering death of Pompeii.

E. If, nevertheless, you persevere diligently in seeing what stars you can in the early morning, and use what is left you of light wisely, you will gradually discover that the United Grand Steam Percussion and Corrosion Company is a company of thieves; and that you yourself are an ass, for letting them steal your money, and your light, at once. And that there is standing order from the Maker of Light, and Filler of pockets, that the company shall not be thieves, but honest men; and that you yourself shall not be an ass, but a Magus.

F. If you remind the company of this law, they will tell you that people "didn't know everything down in Judee;" that nobody ever made the world; and that nobody but the company knows it.

But if you enforce upon yourself the commandment not to be an ass, and verily resolve to be so no more, then—hear the word of God, spoken to you by the only merchant city that ever set herself to live wholly by His law.*

"I willed, and sense was given to me.

I prayed, and the Spirit of Wisdom was given to me.

I set her before Kingdoms and Homes,

And held riches nothing, in comparison of her."

That is to say,—If you would have her to dwell with you, you must set her before kingdoms;—(as,

* See Fourth Morning in Florence 'The Vaulted Book.'

for instance, at Sheffield, you must not think to be kings of cutlery, and let nobody else in the round world make a knife but you;)—you must set her before homes; that is to say, you must not sit comfortably enjoying your own fireside, and think you provide for everybody if you provide for that:—and as for riches—you are only to *prefer* wisdom,—think her, of two good things, the best, when she is matched with kingdoms and homes; but you are to esteem riches—*nothing* in comparison of her. Not so much as *mention* shall be made “of coral, nor of pearls, for the price of wisdom is above rubies.”

You have not had the chance, you think, probably, of making any particular mention of coral, or pearls, or rubies? Your betters, the Squires and the Clergy, have kept, ‘if not the coral, at least the pearls, for their own wives’ necks, and the rubies for their own mitres; and have generously accorded to you heavenly things,—wisdom, namely, concentrated in your responses to Catechism. I find St. George, on the contrary, to be minded that you shall at least know what these earthly goods are, in order to your despising them in a sensible manner;—for you can’t despise them if you know nothing about them.

I am going, under His orders, therefore, to give you some topazes of Ethiopia,—(at least, of the Ural mountains, where the topazes are just as good,)—and all manner of coral, that you may know what co-operative societies are working, to make your babies their rattles and necklaces, without any

steam to help them, under the deep sea, and in its foam ; also out of the Tay, the fairest river of the British Isles, we will fetch some pearls that nobody shall have drawn short breath for : and, indeed, all the things that Solomon in his wisdom sent his ships to Tarshish for,—gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks,—you shall see in their perfection and have as much of as St. George thinks good for you : (only remember, in order to see an ape in perfection, you must not be an ape yourself, whatever Mr. Darwin may say ; but must admire, without imitating their prehensile activities, nor fancy that you can lay hold on to the branches of the tree of life with your tails instead of your hands, as you have been practising lately).

And, in the meantime, I must stop writing because I've to draw a peacock's breast-feather, and paint as much of it as I can without having heaven to dip my brush in. And when you have seen what it is, you shall despise it—if you can—for heaven itself. But for nothing less !

My fragment * does not quite end here ; but in its following statements of plans for the Sheffield Museum, anticipates more than I think Atropos would approve ; besides getting more figurative and metaphysical than you would care to read after your Christmas dinner. But here is a piece of inquiry into the origin of all riches, Solomon's and

* [Written for Christmas *Fo's*.]

our own, which I wrote in May, 1873, for the *Contemporary Review*, and which, as it sums much of what I may have too vaguely and figuratively stated in my letters, may advisably close their series for this year.

It was written chiefly in reply to an article by Mr. Greg, defending the luxury of the rich as harmless, or even beneficent to the poor. Mr. Greg had, on his part, been reproving Mr. Goldwin Smith—who had spoken of a rich man as consuming the means of living of the poor. And Mr. Greg pointed out how beneficially for the poor, in a thousand channels, the rich man spent what he had got.

Whereupon I ventured myself to inquire, "How he got it?" and the paper went on thus,—which is indeed the first of all questions to be asked when the economical relations of any man with his neighbour are to be examined.

Dick Turpin is blamed—suppose—by some plain-minded person, for consuming the means of other people's living. "Nay," says Dick to the plain-minded person, "observe how beneficently and pleasantly I spend whatever I get!"

"Yes, Dick," persists the plain-minded person, "but how do you get it?"

"The question," says Dick, "is insidious, and irrelevant."

Do not let it be supposed that I mean to assert any irregularity or impropriety in Dick's profession—I merely assert the necessity for Mr. Greg's

examination, if he would be master of his subject, of the manner of *Gain* in every case, as well as the manner of *Expenditure*. Such accounts must always be accurately rendered in a well-regulated society.

“Le lieutenant adressa la parole au capitaine, et lui dit qu’il venait d’enlever ces mannequins, remplis de sucre, de cannelle, d’amandes, et de raisins secs, à un épicier de Bénavente. Après qu’il eut rendu compte de son expédition au bureau, les dépouilles de l’épicier furent portées dans l’office. Alors il ne fut plus question que de se réjouir; je débutai par le buffet, que je parai de plusieurs bouteilles de ce bon vin que le Seigneur Rolando m’avoit vanté.”

Mr. Greg strictly confines himself to an examination of the benefits conferred on the public by this so agreeable festivity; but he must not be surprised or indignant that some inquiry should be made as to the resulting condition of the épicier de Bénavente.

And it is all the more necessary that such inquiry be instituted, when the captain of the expedition is a minion, not of the moon, but of the sun; and dazzling, therefore, to all beholders. “It is heaven which dictates what I ought to do upon this occasion,”* says Henry of Navarre; “my retreat

* I use the current English of Mrs. Lennox’s translation, but Henry’s real saying was (see the first—green leaf—edition of Sully), “It is written above what is to happen to me on *every* occasion.” “Toute occasion” becomes “Cette occasion” in the subsequent

out of this city, before I have made myself master of it, will be the retreat of my soul out of my body." "Accordingly, all the quarter which still held out, we forced," says M. de Rosny; "after which the inhabitants, finding themselves no longer able to resist, laid down their arms, and the city was given up to plunder. My good fortune threw a small iron chest in my way, in which I found about four thousand gold crowns."

I cannot doubt that the Baron's expenditure of this sum would be in the highest degree advantageous to France, and to the Protestant religion. But complete economical science must study the effect of its abstraction on the immediate prosperity of the town of Cahors; and even beyond this—the mode of its former acquisition by the town itself, which perhaps, in the economies of the nether world, may have delegated some of its citizens to the seventh circle.

And the most curious points, in the modes of study pursued by modern economical science, are, that while it always *waives this question of ways and means* with respect to *rich* persons, it studiously pushes it in the case of *poor* ones; and while it asserts the consumption of such an article of luxury as wine (to take that which Mr. Greg himself instances) to be economically expedient, when the wine is drunk by persons who are *not* thirsty, it asserts the same consumption to be altogether

editions, and finally "what is to happen to me" (*ce que doit être fait de moi*) becomes "what I ought to do" in the English.

inexpedient, when the privilege is extended to those who *are*. Thus Mr. Greg dismisses, at page 618, with compassionate disdain, the extremely vulgar notion "that a man who drinks a bottle of champagne worth five shillings, while his neighbour is in want of actual food, is in some way wronging his neighbour;" and yet Mr. Greg himself, at page 624, evidently remains under the equally vulgar impression that the twenty-four millions of much thirstier persons who spend fifteen per cent. of their incomes in drink and tobacco, *are* wronging their neighbours by *that* expenditure.

It cannot, surely, be the difference in degree of refinement between malt liquor and champagne which causes Mr. Greg's conviction that there is moral delinquency and economical error in the latter case, but none in the former; if that be all, I can relieve him from his embarrassment by putting the cases in more parallel form. A clergyman writes to me, in distress of mind, because the able-bodied labourers who come begging to him in winter, drink port wine out of buckets in summer. Of course Mr. Greg's logical mind will at once admit (as a consequence of his own very just argumentum ad hominem in page 617) that the consumption of port wine out of buckets must be as much a benefit to society in general as the consumption of champagne out of bottles; and yet, curiously enough, I am certain he will feel my question, "Where does the drinker get the means for his drinking?" more relevant in the case of the imbibers of port than in

that of the imbibers of champagne. And although Mr. Greg proceeds, with that lofty contempt for the dictates of nature and Christianity which radical economists cannot but feel, to observe (p. 618) that "while the natural man and the Christian would have the champagne drinker forego his bottle, and give the value of it to the famishing wretch beside him, the radical economist would condemn such behaviour as distinctly criminal and pernicious," he would scarcely, I think, carry out with the same triumphant confidence the conclusions of the unnatural man and the Anti-Christian with respect to the labourer as well as the idler; and declare that while the extremely simple persons who still believe in the laws of nature, and the mercy of God, would have the port-drinker forego his bucket, and give the value of it to the famishing wife and child beside him, "the radical economist would condemn such behaviour as distinctly criminal and pernicious."

Mr. Greg has it indeed in his power to reply that it is proper to economize for the sake of one's own wife and children, but not for the sake of anybody else's. But since, according to another exponent of the principles of Radical Economy, in the *Cornhill Magazine*, a well-conducted agricultural labourer must not marry till he is forty-five, his economies, if any, in early life, must be as offensive to Mr. Greg, on the score of their abstract humanity, as those of the richest bachelor about town.

There is another short sentence in this same

page 618, of which it is difficult to overrate the accidental significance.

The superficial observer, says Mr. Greg, "recollects a text which he heard in his youth, but of which he never considered the precise applicability—'He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none.'"

The assumptions that no educated Englishman can ever have heard that text *except* in his youth, and that those who are old enough to remember having heard it, "never considered its precise applicability," are surely rash, in the treatment of a scientific subject. I can assure Mr. Greg that a few grey-headed votaries of the creed of Christendom still read—though perhaps under their breath—the words which early associations have made precious to them; and that in the bygone days, when that Sermon on the Mount was still listened to with respect by many not illiterate persons, its meaning was not only considered, but very deliberately acted upon. Even the readers of the *Contemporary Review* may perhaps have some pleasure in retreating from the sunshine of contemporary science, for a few quiet moments, into the shadows of that of the past; and hearing in the following extracts from two letters of Scott's (the first describing the manner of life of his mother, whose death it announces to a friend; the second, anticipating the verdict of the future on the management of his estate by a Scottish nobleman) what relations between rich and poor were possible,

when philosophers had not yet even lisped in the sweet numbers of Radical Sociology.

"She was a strict economist, which she said enabled her to be liberal; out of her little income of about £300 a year, she bestowed at least a third in well-chosen charities, and with the rest, lived like a gentlewoman, and even with hospitality more general than seemed to suit her age; yet I could never prevail on her to accept of any assistance. You cannot conceive how affecting it was to me to see the little preparations of presents which she had assorted for the New Year, for she was a great observer of the old fashions of her period—and to think that the kind heart was cold which delighted in all these arts of kindly affection."

"The Duke is one of those retired and high-spirited men who will never be known until the world asks what became of the huge oak that grew on the brow of the hill, and sheltered such an extent of ground. During the late distress, though his own immense rents remained in arrears, and though I know he was pinched for money, as all men were, but more especially the possessors of entailed estates, he absented himself from London in order to pay, with ease to himself, the labourers employed on his various estates. These amounted (for I have often seen the roll and helped to check it) to nine hundred and fifty men, working at day wages, each of whom on a moderate average might maintain three persons, since the single men have mothers, sisters, and aged or very young relations

to protect and assist. Indeed it is wonderful how much even a small sum, comparatively, will do in supporting the Scottish labourer, who in his natural state is perhaps one of the best, most intelligent, and kind-hearted of human beings; and in truth I have limited my other habits of expense very much since I fell into the habit of employing mine honest people. I wish you could have seen about a hundred children, being almost entirely supported by their fathers' or brothers' labour, come down yesterday to dance to the pipes, and get a piece of cake and bannock, and pence apiece (no very deadly largess) in honour of hogmanay. I declare to you, my dear friend, that when I thought the poor fellows who kept these children so neat, and well taught, and well behaved, were slaving the whole day for eighteen-pence or twenty-pence at most, I was ashamed of their gratitude, and of their becks and bows. But after all, one does what one can, and it is better twenty families should be comfortable according to their wishes and habits, than that half that number should be raised above their situation."

I must pray Mr. Greg farther to observe, if he has condescended to glance at these remains of almost prehistoric thought, that although the modern philosopher will never have reason to blush for any man's gratitude, and has totally abandoned the romantic idea of making even so much as one family comfortable according to their wishes and habits, the alternative suggested by Scott, that *half* "the number

should be raised above their situation," may become a very inconvenient one if the doctrines of Modern Equality and competition should render the *other* half desirous of parallel promotion.

It is now just sixteen years since Mr. Greg's present philosophy of Expenditure was expressed with great precision by the Common Councilmen of New York, in their report on the commercial crisis of 1857,* in the following terms:—

"Another erroneous idea is that luxurious living, extravagant dressing, splendid turn-outs, and fine houses, are the cause of distress to a nation. No more erroneous impression could exist. Every extravagance that the man of 100,000 or 1,000,000 dollars indulges in, adds to the means, the support, the wealth of ten or a hundred who had little or nothing else but their labour, their intellect, or their taste. If a man of 1,000,000 dollars spends principal and interest in ten years, and finds himself beggared at the end of that time, he has actually made a hundred who have catered to his extravagance, employers or employed, so much richer by the division of his wealth. He may be ruined, but the nation is better off and richer, for one hundred minds and hands, with 10,000 dollars apiece, are far more productive than one with the whole."

Now that is precisely the view also taken of the matter by a large number of Radical Economists in England as well as America; only they feel that the

* See the *Times* of November 23rd of that year.

time, however short, which the rich gentleman takes to divide his property among them in his own way, is practically wasted; and even worse, because the methods which the gentleman himself is likely to adopt for the depression of his fortune will not, in all probability, be conducive to the elevation of his character. It appears, therefore, on moral as well as economical grounds, desirable that the division and distribution should at once be summarily effected; and the only point still open to discussion in the views of the Common Councilmen is to what degree of minuteness they would think it advisable to carry the subsequent *subdivision*

I do not suppose, however, that this is the conclusion which Mr. Greg is desirous that the general Anti-Christian public should adopt; and in that case, as I see by his paper in the last number of the *Contemporary*, that he considers the Christian life itself virtually impossible, may I recommend his examination of the manners of the Pre-Christian? For I can certify him that this important subject, of which he has only himself imperfectly investigated one side, had been thoroughly investigated on all sides, at least seven hundred years before Christ; and from that day to this, all men of wit, sense, and feeling have held precisely the same views on the subjects of economy and charity in all nations under the sun. It is of no consequence whether Mr. Greg chooses the experience of Bœotia, Lombardy, or Yorkshire, nor whether he studies the relation of each day to its labour under Hesiod, Virgil, or

Sydney Smith. But it is desirable that at least he should acquaint himself with the opinions of some of these persons, as well as with those of the Common Councilmen of New York; for though a man of superior sagacity may be pardoned for thinking, with the friends of Job, that Wisdom will die with him, it can only be through neglect of the existing opportunities of general culture that he remains distinctly under the impression that she was born with him.

It may perhaps be well that, in conclusion, I should state briefly the causes and terms of the economical crisis of our own day, which has been the subject of the debate between Mr. Goldwin Smith and Mr. Greg.

No man ever became, or can become, largely rich merely by labour and economy. All large fortunes (putting treasure-trove and gambling out of consideration) are founded either on occupation of land, usury, or taxation of labour. Whether openly or occultly, the landlord, money-lender, and capital-holding employer, gather into their possession a certain quantity of the means of existence which other people produce by the labour of their hands. The effect of this impost upon the condition of life of the tenant, borrower, and workman, is the first point to be studied;—the results, that is to say, of the mode in which Captain Roland *fills* his purse.

Secondly, we have to study the effects of the mode in which Captain Roland *empties* his purse. The landlord, usurer, or labour-master,

does not, and cannot, himself consume all the means of life he collects. He gives them to other persons, whom he employs in his own behalf—growers of champagne; jockeys; footmen; jewellers; builders; painters; musicians; and the like. The diversion of the labour of these persons from the production of food to the production of articles of luxury is very frequently, and, at the present day, very grievously, a cause of famine. But when the luxuries are produced, it becomes a quite separate question who is to have them; and whether the landlord and capitalist are entirely to monopolize the music, the painting, the architecture, the hand-service, the horse-service, and the sparkling champagne of the world.

And it is gradually, in these days, becoming manifest to the tenants, borrowers, and labourers, that instead of paying these large sums into the hands of the landlords, lenders, and employers, that *they* may purchase music, painting, etc.; the tenants, borrowers, and workers, had better buy a little music and painting for themselves! That, for instance, instead of the capitalist-employer's paying three hundred pounds for a full-length portrait of himself, in the attitude of investing his capital, the united workmen had better themselves pay the three hundred pounds into the hands of the ingenious artist, for a painting, in the antiquated manner of Lionardo or Raphael, of some subject more religiously or historically interesting to *them*; and placed where they can always see it. And again, instead of paying three hundred pounds to

the obliging landlord, that he may buy a box at the opera with it, whence to study the refinements of music and dancing, the tenants are beginning to think that they may as well keep their rents partly to themselves, and therewith pay some Wandering Willie to fiddle at their own doors; or bid some grey-haired minstrel

“Tune, to please a peasant’s ear,
The harp a king had loved to hear.”

And similarly the dwellers in the hut of the field, and garret of the city, are beginning to think that, instead of paying half-a-crown for the loan of half a fireplace, they had better keep their half-crown in their pockets till they can buy for themselves a whole one.

These are the views which are gaining ground among the poor; and it is entirely vain to endeavour to repress them by equivocations. They are founded on eternal laws; and although their recognition will long be refused, and their promulgation, resisted as it will be, partly by force, partly by falsehood, can only take place through incalculable confusion and misery, recognized they must be eventually; and with these three ultimate results:—that the usurer’s trade will be abolished utterly;—that the employer will be paid justly for his superintendence of labour, but not for his capital; and the landlord paid for his superintendence of the cultivation of land, when he is able to direct it wisely;—that both he, and the employer of mechanical labour, will be recognized

as beloved masters, if they deserve love, and as noble guides when they are capable of giving discreet guidance; but neither will be permitted to establish themselves any more as senseless conduits, through which the strength and riches of their native land are to be poured into the cup of the fornication of its Babylonian 'City of the Plain.'

So ends my article, and enough said for 1875, I think. And I wish you a merry Christmas, my masters; and honest ways of winning your meat and pudding.

LETTER LXI

THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH

November 28th, 1875.

‘LIVE AND LEARN.’ I trust it may yet be permitted me to fulfil the adage a few years longer, for I find it takes a great deal of living to get a little deal of learning. (Query, meaning of ‘deal’?—substantive of verb deal—as at whist?—no Johnson by me, and shall be sure to forget to look when I have.) But I *have* learned something this morning,—the use of the holes in the bottom of a fireshovel, to wit. I recollect, now, often and often, seeing my mother sift the cinders; but, alas, she never taught *me* to do it. Did not think, perhaps, that I should ever have occasion, as a Bishop, to occupy myself in that manner; nor understand,—poor sweet mother,—how advisable it might be to have some sort of holes in my shovel-hat, for sifting cinders of human soul.

Howsoever, I have found out the art, this morning, in the actual ashes; thinking all the time how it was possible for people to live in this weather, who had no cinders to sift. My hostess’s white cat, Lily, woke me at half-past five by piteous

mewing at my window; and being let in, and having expressed her thanks by getting between my legs over and over again as I was shaving, has at last curled herself up in my bed, and gone to sleep,—looking as fat as a little pillow, only whiter; but what are the cats to do, to-day, who have no one to let them in at the windows, no beds to curl up into, and nothing but skin and bones to curl?

‘It can’t be helped, you know;—meantime, let Lily enjoy her bed, and be thankful, (if possible, in a more convenient manner). And do you enjoy your fire, and be thankful,’ say the pious public: and subscribe, no doubt at their Rector’s request, for an early dole of Christmas coals. Alas, my pious public, all this temporary doling and coaling is worse than useless. It drags out some old women’s lives a month or two longer,—makes, here and there, a hearth savoury with smell of dinner, that little knew of such frankincense; but, for true help to the poor, you might as well light a lucifer match to warm their fingers; and for the good to your own hearts,—I tell you solemnly, all your comfort in such charity is simply, Christ’s dipped sop, given to you for signal to somebody else than Christ, that it is *his* hour to find the windows of your soul open—to the Night, whence very doleful creatures, of other temper and colour than Lily, are mewing to get in.

Indeed, my pious public, you cannot, at present, by any coal or blanket subscription, do more than blind yourselves to the plain order “Give to him

that asketh thee ; and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away." .

To him that asketh us, say the public,—but then—everybody would ask us.

Yes, you pitiful public,—pretty nearly everybody would : that is indeed the state of national dignity, and independence, and gushing prosperity, you have brought your England into ; a population mostly of beggars, (at heart) ; or, worse, bagmen, not merely bearing the bag—but nothing else *but* bags ;—sloppy, star-fishy, seven-suckered stomachs of indiscriminate covetousness, ready to beg, borrow, gamble, swindle, or write anything a publisher will pay for.

Nevertheless your order is precise, and clear ; ' Give to him that asketh thee '—even to the half of your last cloak—says St. Martin ; even to the whole of it, says Christ : ' whosoever of you forsaketh not *all* that he hath, cannot be my disciple.'

' And you yourself, who have a house among the lakes, and rooms at Oxford, and pictures, and books, and a Dives dinner every day, how about all that ? '

Yes, you may well ask,—and I answer very distinctly and frankly, that if once I am convinced (and it is not by any means unlikely I should be so) that to put all these things into the hands of others, and live myself, in a cell at Assisi, or a shepherd's cottage in Cumberland, would be right, and wise, under the conditions of human life and thought with which I have to deal—very assuredly I will do so.

Nor is it, I repeat, unlikely that such conviction may soon happen to me ; for I begin to question very strictly with myself, how it is that St. George's work does not prosper better in my hands.

Here is the half-decade of years, past, since I began the writing of *Fors*, as a byework to quiet my conscience, that I might be happy in what I supposed to be my own proper life of Art-teaching, at Oxford and elsewhere ; and, through my own happiness, rightly help others.

But Atropos has ruled it quite otherwise. During these five years, very signal distress has visited me, conclusively removing all possibilities of cheerful action ; separating and sealing a great space of former life into one wide field of *Machpelah* ; and leaving the rest sunless. Also, everything I have set hand to has been unprosperous ; much of it even calamitous ;—disappointment, coupled with heavy money loss, happening in almost every quarter to me, and casting discredit on all I attempt ; while, in things partly under the influence and fortune of others, and therefore more or less successful,—the schools at Oxford especially, which owe the greater part of their efficiency to the fostering zeal of Dr. Acland, and the steady teaching of Mr. Macdonald,—I have not been able, for my own share, to accomplish the tenth part of what I planned.

Under which conditions, I proceed in my endeavour to remodel the world, with more zeal, by much, than at the beginning of the year 1871.

For these following reasons.

First, that I would give anything to be quit of the whole business; and therefore that I am certain it is not ambition, nor love of power, nor anything but absolute and mere compassion, that drags me on. That shoemaker, whom his son left lying dead with his head in the fireplace the other day,*—I wish he and his son had never been born;—but as the like of them will be born, and must so die, so long as things remain as they are, there's no choice for me but to do all I know to change them, since others won't.

Secondly. I observe that when all things, in early life, appeared to be going well for me, they were by no means going well, in the deep of them, but quite materially and rapidly otherwise. Whence I conclude that though things appear at present adverse to my work and me, they may not at all be adverse in the deep of them, but quite otherwise.

Thirdly. Though in my own fortune, unprosperous, and in my own thoughts and labour, failing, I find more and more every day that I have helped many persons unknown to me; that others, in spite of my failures, begin to understand me, and are ready to follow; and that a certain power is indeed already in my hands, woven widely into the threads of many human lives; which power, if I now laid down, that line (which I have always kept the

* See note at the end of this Letter.

murmur of in my ears, for warning, since first I read it thirty years ago,)—

“Che fece per viltate il gran rifiuto,”*

would be finally and fatally true of me.

Fourthly, not only is that saying of Bacon's of great comfort to me, “therefore extreme lovers of their country, or masters, were never fortunate; neither can they be, for when a man placeth his thoughts without himself, he goeth not his own way,”† for truly I have always loved my masters, Turner, Tintoret, and Carlyle, to the exclusion of my own thoughts; and my country more than my own garden: but also, I do not find in the reading of history that any victory worth having was ever won without cost; and I observe that too open and early prosperity is rarely the way to it.

But lastly, and chiefly. If there be any truth in the vital doctrines of Christianity whatsoever,—and assuredly there is more than most of us recognize, or than any of us believe,—the offences committed in this century by all the nations of Christendom against the law of Christ have been so great, and insolent, that they cannot but be punished by the withdrawal of spiritual guidance from them, and the

* *Inferno*. III. 60. I fear that few modern readers of Dante understand the dreadful meaning of this hellish outer district, or suburb, full of the refuse or worthless scum of Humanity—such numbers that “non haverei creduto, che morte tanta n’havesse disfatta,”—who are stung to bloody torture by insects, and whose blood and tears together—the best that human souls can give—are sucked up, on the hell-ground, by worms.

† *Essay XI*.

especial paralysis of efforts intelligently made for their good. In times of more ignorant sinning, they were punished by plagues of the body; but now, by plagues of the soul, and widely infectious insanities, making every true physician of souls helpless, and every false effort triumphant. Nor are we without great and terrible signs of supernatural calamity, no less in grievous changes and deterioration of climate, than in forms of mental disease,* claiming distinctly to be necromantic, and, as far as I have examined the evidence relating to them, actually manifesting themselves as such. For observe you, my friends, countrymen, and brothers—*Either*, at this actual moment of your merry Christmas-time, that has truly come to pass, in falling London, which your greatest Englishman wrote of falling Rome, “the sheeted dead do squeak and gibber in your English streets,”—*Or*, such a system of loathsome imposture and cretinous blasphemy is current among all classes of England and America, as makes the superstition of all past ages divine truth in comparison.

One of these things *is* so—gay friends;—have it which way you will: one or other of these, to me, alike appalling; and in your principal street of

* I leave this passage as it was written; though as it passes through the press, it is ordered by Atropos that I should hear a piece of evidence on this matter no less clear as to the present ministry of such powers as that which led Peter out of prison, than all the former, or nearly all, former evidence examined by me was of the presence of the legion which ruled among the Tombs of Gennesaret.

London society, you have a picture of highly dressed harlots gambling, of naked ones, called Andromeda and Francesca of Rimini, and of Christ led to be crucified, exhibited, for your better entertainment, in the same room; and at the end of the same street, an exhibition of jugglery, professedly imitating, *for money*, what a large number of you believe to be the efforts of the returned Dead to convince you of your Immortality.

Meantime, at the other end—no, at the very centre of your great Babylon,—a son leaves his father dead, with his head, instead of a fire, in the fireplace, and goes out himself to his day's darg.

* * * * *

'We are very sorry;—What can we do? How can we help it? London is so big, and living is so very expensive, you know.'

Miserables,—who makes London big, but you, coming to look at the harlotries in it, painted and other? Who makes living expensive, but you, who drink, and eat, and dress, all you can; and never in your lives did one stroke of work to get your living,—never drew a bucket of water, never sowed a grain of corn, never spun a yard of thread;—but you devour, and swill, and waste, to your fill, and think yourselves good, and fine, and better creatures of God, I doubt not, than the poor starved wretch of a shoemaker, who shod whom he could, while you gave him food enough to keep him in strength to stitch.

We, of the so-called 'educated' classes, who take

it upon us to be the better and upper part of the world, cannot possibly understand our relations to the rest better than we may where actual life may be seen in front of its Shakespearean image, from the stalls of a theatre. I never stand up to rest myself, and look round the house, without renewal of wonder how the crowd in the pit, and shilling gallery, allow us of the boxes and stalls to keep our places! Think of it;—those fellows behind there have housed us and fed us; their wives have washed our clothes, and kept us tidy;—they have bought us the best places,—brought us through the cold to them; and there they sit behind us, patiently, seeing and hearing what they may. There they pack themselves, squeezed and distant, behind our chairs;—we, their elect toys and pet puppets, oiled and varnished, and incensed, lounge in front, placidly, or for the greater part, wearily and sickly contemplative. Here we are again, all of us, this Christmas! Behold the artist in tumbling, and in painting with white and red,—our object of worship, and applause: here sit we at our ease, the dressed dolls of the place, with little more in our heads, most of us, than may be contained inside of a wig of flax and a nose of wax; stuck up by these poor little prentices, clerks, and orange sucking mobility, Kit, and his mother, and the baby—behind us, in the chief places of this our evening synagogue. What for? 'They did not stick you up,' say you,—you paid for your stalls with your own money. Where did you get your money? Some of you—if

any Reverend gentlemen, as I hope, are among us, —by selling the Gospel; others by selling Justice; others by selling their Blood—(and no man has any right to sell aught of these three things, any more than a woman her body,)—the rest, if not by swindling, by simple taxation of the labour of the shilling gallery,—or of the yet poorer or better persons who have not so much, or will not spend so much, as the shilling to get there? How else should you, or could you, get your money,—simpletons?

Not that it is essentially your fault, poor feathered moths,—any more than the dead shoemaker's. That blasphemous blockheadism of Mr. Greg's,* and the like of him, that you can swill salvation into other people's bodies out of your own champagne-bottles, is the main root of all your national miseries. Indeed you are willing enough to believe that devil's-gospel, you rich ones; or most of you would have detected the horror of it before now; but yet the chief wrong lies with the assertors of it,—and once and again I tell you, the words of Christ are true, —and not theirs; and that the day has come for fasting and prayer, not for feasting; but, above all, for labour—personal and direct labour—on the Earth that bears you, and buries—as best it can.

9th December.—I heard yesterday that the son of the best English portrait-painter we have had since Gainsborough, had learnt farming; that his father

* Quoted in last Fors, p. 218, from *Contemporary Review*. Observe that it is blasphemy, definitely and calmly uttered, first against Nature, and secondly against Christ.

had paid two hundred pounds a year to obtain that instruction for him; and that the boy is gone, in high spirits, to farm—in Jamaica! So far, so good. Nature and facts are beginning to assert themselves to the British mind. But very dimly.

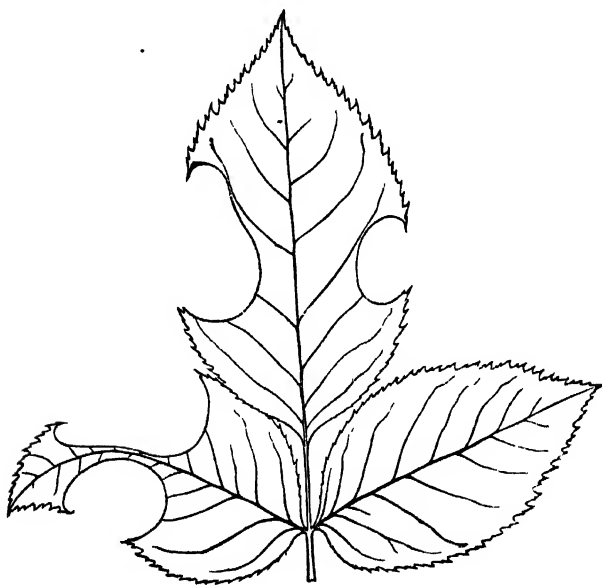
For, first, observe, the father should have paid nothing for that boy's farming education. As soon as he could hold a hoe, the little fellow should have been set to do all he could for his living, under a good farmer for master; and as he became able to do more, taught more, until he knew all that his master knew,—winning, all the while he was receiving that natural education, his bread by the sweat of his brow.

'But there are no farmers who teach—none who take care of their boys, or men.'

Miserables again, whose fault is that? The landlords choose to make the farmers middlemen between the peasants and themselves—grinders, not of corn, but of flesh,—for their rent. And of course you dare not put your children under them to be taught.

Read Gotthelf's 'Ulric the Farm Servant' on this matter. It is one of his great novels,—great as Walter Scott's, in the truth and vitality of it, only inferior in power of design. I would translate it all in Fors, if I had time; and indeed hope to make it soon one of my school series, of which, and other promised matters, or delayed ones, I must now take some order, and give some account, in this opening letter of the year, as far as I can; only, before leaving the young farmer among the Blacks, please

observe that he goes there because you have all made *Artificial Blacks of yourselves, and unmelodious Christys,—nothing but the whites of your eyes showing through the unclean skins of you, here, in Merry England, where there was once green ground to farm instead of ashes.



And first,—here's the woodcut, long promised, of a rose-leaf cut by the leaf-cutting bee, true in size and shape ; a sound contribution to Natural History, so far as it reaches. Much I had to say of it, but am not in humour to-day.

Secondly, I promised a first lesson in writing, of which, therefore, (that we may see what is our present knowledge on the subject, and what farther we may safely ask Theuth* to teach,) I have had engraved two examples, one of writing in the most authoritative manner, used for modern service, and the other of writing by a practised scribe of the fourteenth century. To make the comparison fair, we must take the religious, and therefore most careful, scripture of both dates; so, for example of modern sacred scripture, I take the casting up of a

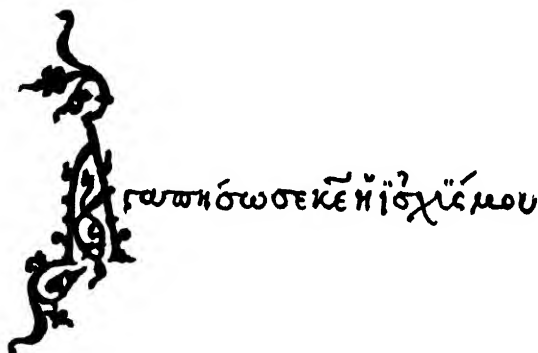
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1	4	2	13	2	2	5	5	16
								2

column in my banker's book; and for the ancient, a letter A, with a few following words, out of a Greek Psalter, which is of admirable and characteristic, but not (by any honest copyist,) inimitable execution.

Here then, first, is modern writing; in facsimile of which I have thought it worth while to employ Mr. Burgess's utmost skill; for it seems to me a fact of profound significance that all the expedients we have invented for saving time, by steam and machinery, (not to speak of the art of printing,)

* Compare Vol. I, Letter XVI., 318, and XVII., 334.

leave us yet so hurried, and flurried, that we cannot produce any lovelier caligraphy than this, even to certify the gratifying existence of a balance of eleven hundred and forty-two pounds, thirteen shillings, and twopence, while the old writer, though required, eventually, to produce the utmost possible number of entire psalters with his own hand, yet has time for the execution of every initial letter of them in the manner here exhibited.



Respecting which, you are to observe that this is pure *writing*, not painting or drawing, but the expression of form by lines such as a pen can easily produce, (or a brush used with the point, in the manner of a pen;) and with a certain habitual currency and fluent habit of finger, yet not dashing or flourishing, but with perfect command of direction in advance, and moment of pause, at any point.

- You may at first, and very naturally, suppose, good reader, that it will not advance your power of English writing to copy a Greek sentence. But, with your pardon, the first need, for all beautiful writing, is that your hand should be, in the true and virtuous sense, *free*; that is to say, able to move in any direction it is ordered, and not cramped to a given slope, or to any given form of letter. And also, whether you can learn Greek or not, it is well, (and perfectly easy,) to learn the Greek alphabet, that if by chance a questionable word occur in your Testament, or in scientific books, you may be able to read it, and even look it out in a dictionary. And this particular manner of Greek writing I wish you to notice, because it is such as Victor Carpaccio represents St. Jerome reading in his study; and I shall be able to illustrate by it some points of Byzantine character of extreme historical interest.

Copy, therefore, this letter A, and the following words, in as perfect facsimile as you can, again and again, not being content till a tracing from the original fits your copy to the thickness of its penstroke. And even by the time next Fors comes out, you will begin to know how to use a pen. Also, you may at spare times practise copying any clearly-printed type, only without the difference of thickness in parts of letters; the best writing for practical purposes is that which most resembles print, connected only, for speed, by the current line.

Next, for some elementary practice of the same kind in the more difficult art of Reading.

A young student, belonging to the working classes, who has been reading books a little too difficult or too grand for him, asking me what he shall read next, I have told him, 'Waverley'—with extreme care.

It is true that, in grandeur and difficulty, I have not a whit really lowered his standard; for it is an achievement as far beyond him, at present, to understand 'Waverley,' as to understand the 'Odyssey;' but the road, though as steep and high-reaching as any he has travelled, is smoother for him. What farther directions I am now going to give him, will be good for all young men of active minds who care to make such activity serviceable.

Read your 'Waverley,' I repeat, with extreme care: and of every important person in the story, consider first what the virtues are; then what the faults inevitable to them by nature and breeding; then what the faults they might have avoided; then what the results to them of their faults and virtues, under the appointment of fate.

Do this after reading each chapter; and write down the lessons which it seems to you that Scott intended in it; and what he means you to admire, what to despise.

Secondly,—supposing you to be, in any the smallest real measure, a Christian,—begin the history of Abraham, as preparatory to that of the first Law-giver whom you have in some understanding

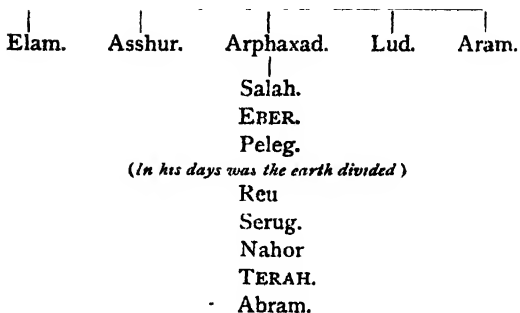
to obey. And the history of Abraham must be led up to, by reading carefully from Genesis ix. 20th, forward, and learning the main traditions which the subsequent chapters contain.

And observe, it does not matter in the least to you, at present, how far these traditions are true. Your business is only to know what is said in Genesis. That does not matter to you, you think? Much less does it matter what Mr. Smith or Mr. Robinson said last night at that public meeting; or whether Mr. Black or his brother, shot Mrs. White; or anything else whatever, small or great, that you will find said or related in the morning papers. But to know what is said in Genesis will enable you to understand, in some sort, the effect of that saying on men's minds, through at least two thousand years of the World's History. Which, if you mean to be a scholar and gentleman, you *must* make some effort to do.

And this is the way to set about it. You see the tenth chapter of Genesis names to you the children, and children's children, of Noah, from whom the nations of the world (it says) came, and by whom the lands of the world (it says) were divided.

You must learn them by rote, in order. You know already, I suppose, the three names, Shem, Ham, and Japheth; begin with Shem, and learn the names of his sons, thus:

SHEM.



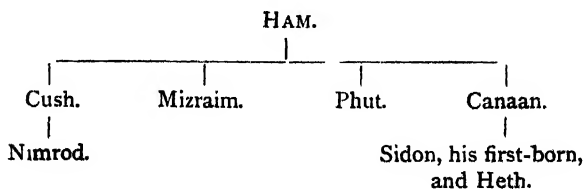
Now, you see that makes a pretty ornamental letter T, with a little joint in the middle of its stalk.

And this letter T you must always be able to write, out of your head, without a moment's hesitation. However stupid you may be at learning by rote, thus much can always be done by dint of sheer patient repetition. Read the centre column straight down, over and again, for an hour together, and you will find it at last begin to stick in your head. Then, as soon as it is fast there, say it over and over again when it is dark, or when you are out walking, till you can't make a mistake in it.

Then observe farther that Peleg, in whose days the earth was divided, had a brother named Joktan, who had thirteen children. Of these, you need not mind the names of ten; but the odd three are important to you—Sheba, Ophir, and Havilah.

You have perhaps heard of these before; and assuredly, if you go on reading Fors, you will hear of them again.

And these thirteen children of Joktan, you see, had their dwelling "from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar, a mount of the East." I don't know anything about Mesha and Sephar, yet; but I may: in the meantime, learn the sentence, and recollect that these people are fixed *somewhere*, at any rate, because they are to be Masters of Gold, which is fixed in Eastern, or Western, mountains; but that the children of the other brother, Peleg, can go wherever they like, and often where they shouldn't, —for "in his days was the earth divided." Recollect also that the children of both brothers, or, in brief, the great Indian gold-possessing race, and the sacred race of prophets and kings of the higher spiritual world, are in the 21st verse of this chapter called "all the children of EBER." If you learn so much as this well, it's enough for this month: but I may as well at once give you the forms you have to learn for the other two sons.



The seventh verse is to be noted as giving the gold-masters of Africa, under two of the same

names as those of Asia, but must not be learned for fear of confusion. The form above given must be amplified and commented on variously, but is best learned first in its simplicity.

JAPHETH.

Gomer.	Magog.	Madaï.	Javan	Tubal	Meshech.	Tiras.
			Elisha.			
			Tarshish.			
			Kittim.			
			Dodanim.			

I leave this blunt-stalked and flat-headed letter T, also, in its simplicity, and we will take up the needful detail in next Fors.

Together with which, (all the sheets being now printed, and only my editorial preface wanting,) I doubt not will be published the first volume of the classical series of books which I purpose editing for St. George's library;—Xenophon's Economist, namely, done into English for us by two of my Oxford pupils; this volume, I hope, soon to be followed by Gotthelf's Ulric the Farm-servant, either in French or English, as the Second Fors, faithfully observant of copyright and other dues, may decide; meantime, our first historical work, relating the chief decision of Atropos respecting the fate of England after the Conquest, is being written for me by a friend, and Fellow of my college of Corpus Christi, whose help I accept, in St. George's

name,—all the more joyfully, because he is our head gardener, no less than our master-historian.

. And for the standard theological writings which are ultimately to be the foundation of this body of secular literature, I have chosen seven authors, whose lives and works, so far as the one can be traced or the other certified, shall be, with the best help I can obtain from the good scholars of Oxford, prepared one by one in perfect editions for the St. George's schools. These seven books will contain, in as many volumes as may be needful, the lives and writings of the men who have taught the purest theological truth hitherto known to the Jews, Greeks, Latins, Italians, and English; namely, Moses, David, Hesiod, Virgil, Dante, Chaucer, and, for seventh, summing the whole with vision of judgment, St. John the Divine.

The Hesiod I purpose, if my life is spared, to translate myself (into prose), and to give in complete form. Of Virgil I shall only take the two first Georgics, and the sixth book of the *Æneid*, but with the Douglas translation; * adding the two first books of Livy, for completion of the image of

“ A Bishop by the Altar stood,
A noble Lord of Douglas blood,
With mitre sheen, and rocquet white.
Yet showed his meek and thoughtful eye
But little pride of prelacy;
More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.”

Roman life. Of Chaucer, I take the authentic poems, except the *Canterbury Tales*; together with, be they authentic or not, the *Dream*, and the fragment of the translation of the *Romance of the Rose*, adding some French chivalrous literature of the same date. I shall so order this work, that in such measure as it may be possible to me, it shall be in a constantly progressive relation to the granted years of my life. The plan of it I give now, and will explain in full detail, that my scholars may carry it out, if I cannot:

And now let my general readers observe, finally, about all reading,—You must read, for the nourishment of your mind, precisely under the moral laws which regulate your eating for the nourishment of the body. That is to say, you must not eat for the pleasure of eating, nor read for the pleasure of reading. But if you manage yourself rightly, you will intensely enjoy your dinner, and your book. If you have any sense, you can easily follow out this analogy: I have not time at present to do it for you; only be sure it holds, to the minutest particular, with this difference only, that the vices and virtues of reading are more harmful on the one side and higher on the other, as the soul is more precious than the body. Gluttonous reading is a worse vice than gluttonous eating; filthy and foul reading, a much more loathsome habit than filthy eating. Epicurism in books is much more difficult of attainment than epicurism in meat, but plain and virtuous feeding the most entirely pleasurable.

And now, one step of farther thought will enable you to settle a great many questions with one answer.

As you may neither eat, nor read, for the pleasure of eating or reading, so you may do *nothing else* for the pleasure of it, but for the use. The moral difference between a man and a beast is, that the one acts primarily for use, the other for pleasure. And all acting for pleasure before use, or instead of use, is in one word, 'Fornication.' That is the accurate meaning of the words 'harlotry,' or 'fornication,' as used in the Bible, wherever they occur spoken of nations, and especially in all the passages relating to the great or spiritual Babylon.

And the Law of God concerning man is, that if he acts for use—that is to say, as God's servant,—he shall be rewarded with such pleasure as no heart can conceive nor tongue tell; only it is revealed by the Spirit, as that Holy Ghost of life and health possesses us; but if we act for pleasure instead of use, we shall be punished by such misery as no heart can conceive nor tongue tell; but which can only be revealed by the adverse spirit, whose is the power of death. And that—I assure you—is absolute, inevitable, daily and hourly Fact for us, to the simplicity of which I to-day invite your scholarly and literary attention.

Our notes for the year 1876 may, I think, best begin with the two pieces of news which follow; and which, by order of Atropos, also followed each other in the

column of the *Morning Advertiser*, from which I print them.

For, though I am by this time known to object to Advertisement in general, I beg the public to observe that my objection is only to bought or bribed Advertisement (especially if it be Advertisement of one's self). But that I hold myself, and this book of mine, for nothing better than Morning, Noon, and Evening Advertisers, of what things appear verily noteworthy in the midst of us. Whereof I commend the circumstances of the deaths, beneath related, very particularly to the attention of the Bishops of London and York.

"SHOCKING DEATH FROM STARVATION.—Last night Mr. Bedford, the Westminster coroner, held an inquest at the Board-room, Dean Street, Soho, on the body of Thomas Gladstone, aged 58, of 43, King Street, Seven Dials, a shoemaker, who was found dead on Thursday last.

William Gladstone, a lad of 15, identified the body as that of his father, with whom he and three other children lived. Deceased had been ailing for some time past, and was quite unable to do any work. The recent cold weather had such an effect upon him that he was compelled to remain in his room on Wednesday last, and at three the next morning witness found him sitting up in bed complaining of cold, and that he was dying. Witness went to sleep, and on awaking at eight that morning he found deceased with his head in the fireplace. Thinking he was only asleep, witness went to work, and on returning two hours later, he was still in the same position, and it was then found that he was dead.

Coroner.—Why did you not send for a doctor?

Witness.—I didn't know he wanted one until he was dead, and we found out amongst us that he was dead.

Jane Gladstone, the widow, said she had been living apart from her husband for some months, and first heard of his death at 2.30 on Thursday afternoon, and upon going to his room found him dead lying upon a mattress on the floor. . . .

[Farther details omitted in this edition of *Fors*; the medical evidence concludes:—] Death had resulted probably from a complication of ailments, but there was no doubt whatever that such death had been much accelerated by want of the common necessities of life.

The Coroner.—Starvation, in short?

Witness.—Precisely so. I never in all my experience saw a greater case of destitution.

The Coroner.—Then I must ask the jury to adjourn the case. Here is a very serious charge against work-house officials, and a man dying clearly from starvation, and it is due alike to the family of the deceased, the parish officials, and the public at large, that the case should be sifted to the very bottom, and the real cause of this death elucidated.

Adjourned accordingly.

SHOCKING DISCOVERY.—A painful sensation was, says the *Sheffield Telegraph*, caused in the neighbourhood of Castleford, near Pontefract, on Friday evening, by the report made to a police-constable stationed at Allerton Bywater that a woman and child had been found dead in bed in Lock Lane, Castleford, under most mysterious circumstances, and that two small children were also found nearly starved to death beside the two dead bodies. . . .

[The report concludes:] Beside the corpse of the mother lay a knife and portions of a loaf of bread, which had been no doubt taken to her by the children to be supplied with some, but being unable to get an

answer from her, they had nibbled the middle of the loaf clean away. A post-mortem examination showed that the mother had died from heart disease, and the child on the following day from starvation. The jury returned a verdict to that effect."—*Morning Advertiser*, December 7th, 1875.

LETTER LXII

DOGS OF THE LORD

THERE were more, and more harmful misprints in last 'Fors' than usual,* owing to my having driven my printers to despair, after they had made all the haste they could, by late dubitation concerning the relative ages of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, which forced me to cut out a sentence about them, and displace corrected type. But I must submit to all and sundry such chances of error, for, to prevent them, would involve a complete final reading of the whole, with one's eye and mind on the look-out for letters and stops all along, for which I rarely allow myself time, and which, had I a month to spare, would yet be a piece of work ill spent, in merely catching three t's instead of two in a "lettter." The reader must, however, be kind enough to insert an s, changing 'death' into 'deaths,' in the twelfth line of the terminal note;—the death in Sheffield being that commended to the Episcopic attention of York, and that in London to the Episcopic attention of London.

And this commendation, the reader will, I hope,

[* Referring to the original issue.]

perceive to be made in sequel to much former talk concerning Bishops, Soldiers, Lawyers, and Squires;—which, perhaps, he imagined me to have spoken jestingly; or, it may be, in witlessness; or, it may be, in voluble incipient insanity. Admitting myself in no small degree open to such suspicion, I am now about to re-word some matters which madness would gambol from; and I beg the reader to observe that any former gambolling on my part, awkward or untimely as it may have seemed, has been quite as serious, and intentionally progressive, as Morgiana's dance round the captain of the Forty Thieves.

If, then, the reader will look at the analysis of Episcopacy in 'Sesame and Lilies;' next at the chapter on Episcopacy in 'Time and Tide;' and lastly, refer to what he can gather in the past series of 'Fors,' he will find the united gist of all to be, that Bishops cannot take, much less give, account of men's souls unless they first take and give account of their bodies: and that, therefore, all existing poverty and crime in their dioceses, discoverable by human observation, must be, when they are Bishops indeed, clearly known to, and describable by them, or their subordinates. Of whom the number, and discipline in St. George's Company, if by God's grace it ever take the form I intend, will be founded on the institution of the same by the first Bishop, or more correctly Archbishop, whom the Christian church professes to obey. For what can possibly be the use of printing

the Ten Commandments which he delivered, in gold,—framing them above the cathedral altar,—pronouncing them in a prelatically sonorous voice,—and arranging the responsive supplications of the audience to the tune of an organ of the best manufacture, if the commanding Bishops institute no inquiry whatever into the physical power of—say this starving shoemaker in Seven Dials,—to obey such a command as ‘thou shalt not covet’ in the article of meat; or of his son to honour in any available measure either the father or mother, of whom the one has departed to seek her separate living, and the other is lying dead with his head in the fireplace.

Therefore, as I have just said, our Bishops in St. George’s Company will be constituted in order founded on that appointed by the first Bishop of Israel, namely, that their Primate, or Supreme Watchman, shall appoint under him “out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such over them to be rulers (or, at the *least*, observers) of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens;” * and that of these episcopic centurions, captains of fifty, and captains of ten, there will be required clear account of the individual persons they are set over;—even a baby being considered as a decimal quantity not to be left out of their account by the decimal Bishops,—in which

episcopacy, however, it is not improbable that a queenly power may be associated, with Norman caps for mitres, and for symbol of authority, instead of the crozier, (or crook, for disentangling lost sheep of souls from among the brambles,) the broom, for sweeping diligently till they find lost silver of souls among the dust.

You think I jest, still, do you? Anything but that; only if I took off the Harlequin's mask for a moment, you would say I was simply mad. Be it so, however, for this time.

I simply and most utterly mean, that, so far as my best judgment can reach, the present Bishops of the English Church, (with only one exception, known to me,—the Bishop of Natal,) have forfeited and fallen from their Bishoprics by transgression; and betrayal of their Lord, first by simony, and secondly, and chiefly, by lying for God with one mouth, and contending for their own personal interests as a professional body, as if these were the cause of Christ. And that in the assembly and Church of future England, there must be, (and shall be so far as this present body of believers in God and His law now called together in the name of St. Michael and St. George are concerned,) set up and consecrated other Bishops; and under them, lower ministering officers and true "Dogs of the Lord," who, with stricter inquisition than ever Dominican, shall take knowledge—not of creeds, but of every man's way and means of life; and shall be either able to avouch his conduct

as honourable and just, or bound to impeach it as shameful and iniquitous, and this down to minute details;—above all, or before all, particulars of revenue, every companion, retainer, or associate in the Company's work being bound to keep such accounts that the position of his affairs may be completely known to the bishops at any moment: and all bankruptcies or treacheries in money matters thus rendered impossible. Not that direct inquisition will be often necessary; for when the true nature of Theft, with the other particulars of the Moral Law, are rightly taught in our schools, grown-up men will no more think of stealing in business than in burglary. It is merely through the quite bestial ignorance of the Moral Law in which the English Bishops have contentedly allowed their flocks to be brought up, that any of the modern English conditions of trade are possible.

Of course, for such work, I must be able to find what Jethro of Midian assumes could be found at once in Israel, these "men of truth, hating covetousness," and all my friends laugh me to scorn for thinking to find any such.

Naturally, in a Christian country, it will be difficult enough; but I know there are still that kind of people among Midianites, Caffres, Red Indians, and the destitute, afflicted, and tormented, in dens and caves of the earth, where God has kept them safe from missionaries:—and, as I above said, even out of the rotten mob of money-begotten traitors calling itself a 'people' in England, I do believe I shall be

able to extricate, by slow degrees, some faithful and true persons, hating covetousness, and fearing God.

And you will please to observe that this hate and fear are flat opposites one to the other ; so that if a man fear or reverence God, he must hate covetousness ; and if he fear or reverence covetousness, he must hate God ; and there is no intermediate way whatsoever. Nor is it possible for any man, wilfully rich, to be a God-fearing person ; but only for those who are involuntarily rich, and are making all the haste they prudently and piously can, to be poor ; for money is a strange kind of seed ; scattered, it is poison ; but set, it is bread : so that a man whom God has appointed to be a sower must bear as lightly as he may the burden of gold and of possessions, till he find the proper places to sow them in. But persons desiring to be rich, and accumulating riches, always hate God, and never fear Him ; the idol they do fear—(for many of them are sincerely religious) is an imaginary, or mind-sculptured God of their own making, to their own liking ; a God who allows usury, delights in strife and contention, and is very particular about everybody's going to his synagogues on Sunday.

Indeed, when Adam Smith formally, in the name of the philosophers of Scotland and England, set up this opposite God, on the hill of cursing against blessing, Ebal against Gerizim ; and declared that all men 'naturally' desired their neighbours' goods ; and that in the name of Covetousness, all the nations of the earth should be blessed,—it is true, that the

half-bred and half-witted Scotchman had not gift enough in him to carve so much as his own calf's head on a whinstone with his own hand ; much less to produce a well molten and forged piece of gold, for old Scottish faith to break its tables of ten commandments at sight of. But, in leaving to every artless and ignorant boor among us the power of breeding, in imagination, each his own particular calf, and placidly worshipping that privately fatted animal ; or, perhaps,—made out of the purest fat of it in molten Tallow instead of molten Gold,—images, which may be in any inventive moment, misshapen anew to his mind, Economical Theology has granted its disciples more perfect and fitting privilege.

From all taint or compliance with such idolatry, the Companions of St. George have vowed to withdraw themselves ; writing, and signing their submission to, the First and great Commandment, so called by Christ,—and the Second which is like unto it.

And since on these two hang all the Law and the Prophets, in signing these two promises they virtually vow obedience to all the Law of which Christ then spoke ; and belief of all the Prophets of which Christ then spoke. What that law is ; who those prophets are ;—whether they *only* prophesied 'until John,' or whether St. Paul's command to all Christians living, "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy,"—is an important *little* commandment following the

two great ones, I cannot tell you in a single letter, even if I altogether knew myself. Partly I do know;—and can teach you, if you will work. No one can teach you anything worth learning but through manual labour; the very bread of life can only be got out of the chaff of it by “rubbing it in your hands.”

You vow, then, that you will at least strive to keep both of these commandments—as far as, what some would call the corruption, but what in honest people is the weakness, of flesh, permits. If you cannot watch an hour, because you don't love Christ enough to care about His agony, that is your weakness; but if you first sell Him, and then kiss Him, that is your corruption. I don't know if I can keep either you or myself awake; but at least we may put a stop to our selling and kissing. Be sure that you are serving Christ, till you are tired and can do no more, for that time: and then, even if you have not breath enough left to say “Master, Master” with,—He will not mind.

Begin therefore ‘to-day’—(which you may, in passing, note to be your present leader's signal-word or watch-word)—to do good work for Him,—whether you live or die,—(see first promise asked of you, Letter II., page 39, explained in Letter VII., page 143, etc.,) and see that every stroke of this work—be it weak or strong,—shall therefore be done in love of God and your neighbour, and in hatred of covetousness. Which that you may hate accurately, wisely, and well, it is

needful that you should thoroughly know, when you see it, or feel it. What covetousness is, therefore, let me beg you at once clearly to understand, by meditating on these following definitions.

AVARICE means the desire to collect money, not goods. A 'miser' or 'miserable person' desires to collect goods only for the sake of turning them into money. If you can read French or German, read Molière's *l'Avare*, and then get Gotthelf's 'Bernese Stories,' and read 'Schnitzfritz,' with great care.

Avarice is a quite natural passion, and, within due limits, healthy. The addition of coin to coin, and of cipher to cipher, is a quite proper pleasure of human life, under due rule; the two stories I ask you to read are examples of its disease; which arises mainly in strong and stupid minds, when by evil fortune they have never been led to think or feel.

FRUGALITY. The disposition to save or spare what we have got, without any desire to gain more. It is constantly, of course, associated with avarice; but quite as frequently with generosity, and is often merely an extreme degree of housewifely habit. Study the character of Alison Wilson in 'Old Mortality.'

COVETOUSNESS. The desire of possessing more than we have, of any good thing whatsoever of which we have already enough for our uses, (adding house to house, and field to field). It is much connected with pride; but more with

restlessness of mind and desire of novelty ; much seen in children who tire of their toys and want new ones. The pleasure in having things 'for one's very own' is a very subtle element in it. When I gave away my Loire series of Turner drawings to Oxford, I thought I was rational enough to enjoy them as much in the University gallery as in my own study. But not at all ! I find I can't bear to look at them in the gallery, because they are 'mine' no more.

Now, you observe, that your creed of St. George says you believe in the nobleness of human nature—that is to say, that all our natural instincts are honourable. Only it is not always easy to say which of them are natural and which not.

For instance, Adam Smith says that it is 'natural' for every person to covet his neighbour's goods, and want to change his own for them ; wherein is the origin of Trade, and Universal Salvation.

But God says, 'Thou shalt *not* covet thy neighbour's goods ;' and God, who made you, does in that written law express to you *His* knowledge of your inner heart, and instruct you in the medicine for it. Therefore, on due consideration, you will find assuredly it is quite *unnatural* in you to covet your neighbour's goods.

Consider, first, of the most precious, the wife. It is natural for you to think your own the best and prettiest of women ; not at all to want to change her for somebody else's wife. If you like somebody else's better than yours, and this somebody else

likes yours better than his, and you both want to change, you are both in a non-natural condition, and entirely out of the sphere of happy human love.

Again. It is natural for you to think your own house and garden the nicest house and garden that ever were. If, as should always be, they were your father's before you, and he and you have both taken proper care of them, they are a treasure to you which no money could buy,—the leaving them is always pain,—the return to them, a new thrill and wakening to life. They are a home and place of root to you, as if you were founded on the ground like its walls, or grew into it like its flowers. You would no more willingly transplant yourself elsewhere than the espalier pear-tree of your own grafting would pull itself out by the roots to climb another trellis. That is the natural mind of a man. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house." You are in an entirely non-natural state if you do, and, properly speaking, never had a house in your life.

"Nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant." It is a 'natural' thing for masters to get proud of those who serve them; and a 'natural' thing for servants to get proud of the masters they serve. (You see above how Bacon connects the love of the master with the love of the country.) Nay, if the service has been true, if the master has indeed asked for what was good for himself, and the servant has done what was good for his master, they cannot

choose but like each other ; to have a new servant, or a new master, would be a mere horror to both of them. I have got two Davids, and a Kate, that I wouldn't change for anybody else's servants in the world ; and I believe the only quarrel they have with me is that I don't give them enough to do for me :—this very morning, I must stop writing, presently, to find the stoutest of the Davids some business, or he will be miserable all day.

“Nor his ox, nor his ass.” If you have petted both of your own, properly, from calf and foal, neither these, nor anything else of yours, will you desire to change for “anything that is his.” Do you really think I would change my pen for yours, or my inkstand, or my arm-chair, or my Gainsborough little girl, or my Turner pass of St. Gothard ? I would see you—very uncomfortable—first. And that is the natural state of a human being who has taken anything like proper pains to make *himself* comfortable in God's good world, and get some of the right good, and true wealth of it.

For, you observe farther, the commandment is only that thou shalt not covet *thy neighbour's* goods. It does not say that you are not to covet *any* goods. How *could* you covet your neighbour's, if both your neighbour and you were forbidden to have any ? Very far the contrary ; in the first piece of genealogic geography I have given you to learn, the first descriptive sentence of the land of Havilah is,—“where there is gold ;” and it goes on to say, “And the gold of that land is of the best : there is bdellium,

and the onyx stone." In the Vulgate, 'dellium' and 'lapis onichinus.' In the Septuagint, 'anthrax,' and the 'prase-stone.'

Now, my evangelical friends, here is this book which you call "Word of God," and idolatrously print for your little children's reading and your own, as if your eternal lives depended on every word of it. And here, of the very beginning of the world—and the beginning of property—it professes to tell you something. But what? Have you the smallest idea what 'dellium' is? Might it not as well be bellium, or gellium, or pellium, or mellium, for all *you* know about it? Or do you know what an onyx is? or an anthrax? or a prase? Is not the whole verse pure and absolute gibberish and gabble to you; and do you expect God will thank you for talking gibberish and gabble to your children, and telling them — *that* is His Word? Partly, however, the verse is only senseless to you, because you have never had the sense to look at the stones which God has made. But in still greater measure, it is necessarily senseless, because it is *not* the word of God, but an imperfectly written tradition, which, however, being a most venerable and precious tradition, you do well to make your children read, provided also you take pains to explain to them so much sense as there *is* in it, and yourselves do reverently obey so much law as there is in it. Towards which intelligence and obedience, we will now take a step or two farther from the point of pause in last Fors.

Remember that the three sons of Noah are, respectively,

SHEM, the father of the Imaginative and Contemplative races.

JAPHETH, „ „ Practical and Constructive.

HAM, „ „ Carnal and Destructive.

The sons of Shem are the perceivers of Splendour ;—they see what is best in visible things, and reach forward to the invisible.

The sons of Japheth are the perceivers of Justice and Duty ; and deal securely with all that is under their hand.

The sons of Ham are the perceivers of Evil or Nakedness ; and are slaves therefore for ever—‘servants of servants’ : when in power, therefore, either helpless or tyrannous.

It is best to remember among the nations descending from the three great sires, the Persians, as the sons of Shem ; Greeks, as the sons of Japheth ; Assyrians, as the sons of Ham. The Jewish captivity to the Assyrian then takes its perfect meaning.

This month, therefore, take the first descendant of Ham—Cush ; and learn the following verses of Gen. x. :—

“And Cush begat Nimrod ; he began to be a mighty one in the earth.

“He was a mighty hunter before the Lord.

“And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel in the land of Shinar.

"Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh."

These verses will become in future a centre of thought to you, whereupon you may gather, as on one root-germ, what you farther learn of the influence of hunting on the minds of men: and of the sources of Assyrian power, and causes of the Assyrian ruin in Birs Nemroud, out of which you have had those hunting-pieces brought to the narrow passage in the British Museum.

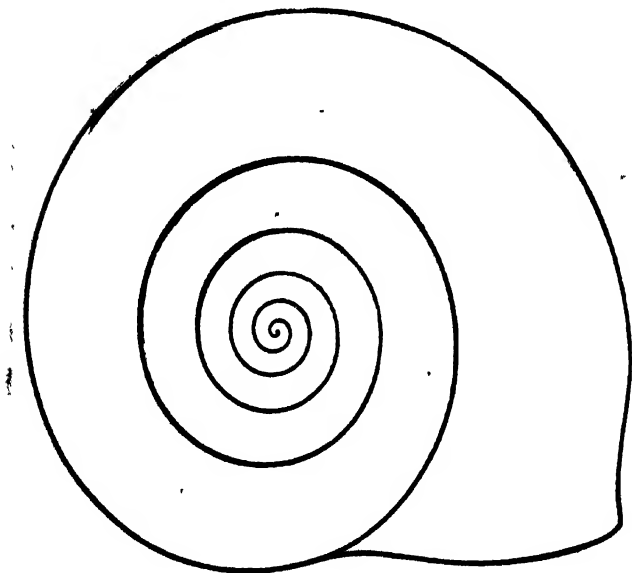
For further subject of thought, this month, ^{*}read of Cary's Dante, the 31st canto of the 'Inferno,' with extreme care; and for your current writing lesson, copy these lines of Italics, which I have printed in as close resemblance as I can to the Italics of the Aldine edition of 1502.

P ero che come in su la cerchia tonda
Monte reggion di torri si corona,
Così la proda che'l pozzo circonda
T' orregiavan di mezza la persona
Gli orribili giganti; cui minaccia
Giove del cielo anchora, quando tona.

The putting of the capital letters that begin the stanza, outside, is a remaining habit of the scribes who wrote for the illuminator, and indicated the letter to be enlarged with ornament at the side of the text.

Of these larger capitals, the A given in last Fors is of a Byzantine Greek school, in which, though there is much quiet grace, there is no

elasticity or force in the lines. They are always languid, and without spring or evidence of nervous force in the hand. They are not, therefore, perfect models for English writers, though they are useful as exercises in tranquillity of line: and I chose, for that and many more reasons, that letter and



sentence for our first exercise. But my letter B is to be given from the Northern Schools; and will have spring and power in it, which you cannot at once hope to imitate in a complete letter; and must be prepared for by copying a mere incipient fragment or flourish of ornamental line.

This line has been drawn for you, very leisurely indeed, by one of the gentlest of the animals living on our English south downs,—and yet, quietly done as it is, being the result of wholly consistent energy, it is a line which a Byzantine Greek would never have produced in writing, nor even in architecture, except when he was imitating an Ionian one.

You are to draw a horizontal line through the point in the centre of this figure. Then measure the breadth of the six coils on each side, counting from the centre backwards and forwards.

Then draw a vertical line through centre, and measure the breadths above and below. Then draw the complete curve lightly through these fixed points—alter it to your mind—and then paint over it the determined line, with any dark colour and a camel's hair brush.

The difficulty is to draw it so that there shall not be the smallest portion of it which is not approaching the inner curve, and narrowing the intermediate space. And you will find no trick of compasses will draw it. Choose any number of centres you like, and still I defy you to draw the curve mechanically; it can be done only as I have done it myself, with the free hand, correcting it and correcting till I got it right.

When you have succeeded, to any moderate extent, in doing this, your hand will have begun to receive the power of executing a serene and dignified flourish instead of a vulgar 'dash.' And you may also begin to understand that the word

'flourish' itself, as applied to writing, means the springing of its lines into floral exuberance,—therefore, strong procession and growth, which must be in a spiral line, for the stems of plants are always spirals. (See 'Proserpina,' Number IV.); and that this bursting out into foliage, in calm swiftness, is a totally different action from the impudent and useless sweeps and loops of vulgar writing.

Further. As your eyes get accustomed to the freely drawn, unmechanical, immeasurable line, you will be able, if you care about architecture, to know a Greek Ionic volute from a vulgar day-labourer's copy of it—done with compasses and calculations. And you will know how the volute of the throne of Lippi's Madonna, (though that is studied from the concave side of the shell,) shows him to have been Etruscan-bred; and you will begin to see what his power was; and to laugh at the books of our miserable modern builders, filled with elaborate devices for drawing volutes with bits of circles:—the wretches might as well try to draw the lips of Sir Joshua's Circe,—or the smile in her cat's triangular eyes, in that manner. Only in Eleutheria of soul and body, shall any human creature draw so much as one rightly bending line.

Any *human* creature, I say. Little freedom, either of body or soul, had the poor architect who drew this our first model line for us; and yet and yet, simple as his life and labours may be, it will take our best wits to understand them. I find myself, at present, without any startpoint for attempt

to understand them. I found the downs near Arundel, being out on them in a sunny day just after Christmas, sprinkled all over with their pretty white shells, (none larger than a sixpence, my drawing being increased as about seven to one, in line, or fifty to one, square,) and all empty, unless perchance some spectral remnant of their dead masters remain inside;—and I can't answer a single question I ask myself about them. I see they most of them have six whirls, or whorls. Had they six when they were young? have they never more when they are old? Certainly some shells have periodical passion of progress—and variously decorative stops and rests; but these little white continuities down to this woful time of their Christmas emptiness, seemed to have deduced their spiral caves in peace.

But it's of no use to waste time in 'thinking.' I shall go and ask some pupil of my dear old friend Dr. Gray at the British Museum, and rejoice myself with a glance at the volutes of the Erectheium—fair home of Athenian thought.

"6, MOIRA PLACE, SOUTHAMPTON,
15th Feb., 1876.

"DEAR SIR,—On referring to *Helix ericetorum* (the species I take your outline to be enlarged from) in Dr. Turton's British Land and Fresh-water Shells, with additions by Dr. Gray, I find it stated, on the authority of M. Bouchard, that the eggs of *H. ericetorum* are laid from July to November, and are from forty to sixty in

number, the time of hatching being twenty days after laying, and the length of the snail's life is eighteen months. It is not, however, stated whether these particulars refer to *H. ericetorum* in England or France.

"The only extra information I can get from my other book is that heavy rains kill great numbers of them.

"Your drawing refers to the shell of a full-grown snail, shown by its having six whorls, and by the slight reflex curve at the outer end of the spiral.

"With regard to the formation of the shell, I can state that it was formed by successive additions during the life of the snail, the small dark transparent portion in the centre of the spiral being the nucleus, and the lines and ridges crossing the spiral indicate the different rings or layers of shell added to suit the convenience of the snail.

"I enclose specimens of *H. ericetorum* from Deal, to enable you to compare them with those from Arundel, to make sure that they are the same species.

"I am, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

"H. L."

LETTER LXIII

SIT SPLENDOR

I FIND it wholly impossible to crush into one Fors what I have been gathering of Bible lesson, natural history lesson, and writing lesson, and to leave room enough for what I have to give of immediate explanation to the Companions, now daily increasing in number. My readers must bear with me—I cannot do more than I am doing, though every day I wonder more at there being so many things apparently my duty to do, while I have only two feeble hands for all of them.

But this much of general statement of the meaning of our Companionship is now absolutely necessary.

Of course, the first natural idea taken up by persons who merely hear talk, or read newspapers, about the Company, is that their domain is intended for a *refuge* for the persons who join it—that within its walls the poor are at once to be made rich, and the sorrowful happy.

Alas, this is not by any means the notion of the St. George's Company. It is to be a band of delivering knights—not of churls needing deliverance; of eager givers and servants—not of eager

beggars, and persons needing service. It is only the Rich, and the Strong, whom I receive for Companions,—those who come not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Rich, yet some of them in other kind of riches than the world's; strong, yet some in other than the world's strength. But this much at least of literal wealth and strength they *must* have,—the power, and formed habit, of self-support. I accept no Companion by whom I am not convinced that the Society will be aided rather than burdened; and although I value intelligence, resolution, and personal strength, more than any other riches, I hope to find, in a little while, that there are people in the world who can hold money without being blinded, by their possession of it, to justice or duty.

The Companions whom I accept will be divided, according to their means and circumstances, into three classes.

The first and highest class will be called 'Comites Ministrantes,' 'Companions Servant.' It will be composed of the few who devote their main energy to the work of the Company; and who, as I do myself, and as the Master must always, pursue their private avocations only in subjection to its interests, being at the same time in positions absolutely independent, and openly shown to be so.

The second, or middle class, will be called 'Comites Militantes,' 'Companions Militant.'

These will be persons occupied actually in manual labour on the ground, or in any work which the

Master may order, for the fulfilment of the Society's functions ; being dependent on such labour for their maintenance, under the conditions fixed by the Company's statutes.

The third and lowest order will be called 'Comites Consilii,' (Friends of, or in, Council,) 'Companions Consular,' who will form the general body of the Society, being occupied in their own affairs as earnestly as before they joined it ; but giving it the tenth of their income ; and in all points, involving its principles, obeying the orders of the Master. Thus almost any tradesman may continue his trade, being a Companion ; but, if a jeweller, he must not sell false jewels ; or if a butcher, (I have one accepted already, and I very much want to get a butcher's daughter, if I could ; but she won't come,) must not sell bad meat.

I at first meant them to be called 'Censors,' or 'Companions Estimant,' because when the Society comes into real work, the sentences of fine, or other disgrace, pronounced by the marshals' officers, and the general modes of determining quality and value of goods, must be always ratified by majority of this order of the Companions, in whom also, by virtue of their number, the election, and therefore censorship, of the Master, will necessarily be vested.

To these last, especially, I have now some special matters to write.

Will you please look back to the Fors of December 24th, last year, (Vol. II., p. 494) and tell me, rather, which is chiefly needful, answer to

yourselves, how far you have reflected, since reading it, on the nature of "unfruitful works of darkness;" how many you have abandoned, and how many reproved. It is too probable that you have not, even yet, the slightest idea what works of darkness are. You know,—they can't mean merely murder, or adultery, or theft. You don't, when you go to church, mean to pray that you may have grace to give up committing murder or adultery, or that you may 'rather reprove *them*'? But what then is it that you pray to give up? If you don't know, are you not, yet, in the least, ashamed of yourselves, for going every Sunday, if not every day, to pray to God, without having the dimmest idea what you mean to ask Him for?

Well,—not to be farther teasing about it,—in the first and simple sense, works of darkness are useless, or ill-done, or half-done, things, which pretend to be good, or to be wholly done; and so mislead or betray.

In the deeper and final sense, a work of darkness is one that seeks concealment, and conceals facts; or even casts disdain and disgrace on facts.

A work of light is one that seeks light, and that, not for its own sake, but to light all men; so that all workers of good work delight in witnesses; only with true desire that the witnesses' pleasure may be greater than theirs; and that the Eternal witnesses—the Cloud around us, and Powers above—may have chief pleasure of all:—(see on this matter, 'Eagle's Nest,' § 54). So that, of these works, what was written of St. Bernard must be

always true, "*Opera sancti Patris velut Sol in conspectu Dei*;" for indeed they are a true Light of the world, infinitely better in the Creator's sight than its dead sunshine; and the discovery by modern science that all mortal strength is from the Sun, while it has thrown foolish persons into atheism, is, to wise ones, the most precious testimony to their faith yet given by physical nature; for it gives us the arithmetical and measurable assurance that men vitally active are living sunshine, having the roots of their souls set in sunlight, as the roots of a tree are in the earth; not that the dust is therefore the God of the tree, but the Tree is the animation of the dust, and the living Soul, of the sunshine. And now you will understand the meaning of the words on our St. George's wealth,—"Sit splendor."

And you must take care that your works do shine before men, as it may be, as a lamp; but at least, as a shield;—nay, if your Captain in Heaven wills it, as a sword.

For the failure of all good people nowadays is that, associating politely with wicked persons, countenancing them in their wickedness, and often joining in it, they think to avert its consequences by collaterally labouring to repair the ruin it has caused; and while, in the morning, they satisfy their hearts by ministering to the wants of two or three destitute persons, in the evening they dine with, envy, and prepare themselves to follow the example of, the rich speculator who has caused the

destitution of two or three thousand. They are thus destroying more in hours than they can amend in years ; or, at the best, vainly feeding the famine-struck populations, in the rear of a devouring army, always on the increase in mass of numbers, and rapidity of march.

Now I call on the St. George's Company, first, to separate themselves clearly, as a body, from persons who practise recognized, visible, unquestionable iniquity. They are to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of Darkness ; but to walk as Children of Light.

Literally, observe. Those phrases of the Bible are entirely evaded, because we never apply them to immediate practice.

St. George's Companions are to have *no fellowship* with works of darkness ; no companionship whatsoever with recognizable mischief, or mischievous men. Of every person of your acquaintance, you are solemnly to ask yourselves, "*Is this man a swindler, a liar, a gambler, an adulterer, a selfish oppressor, and taskmaster ?*"

Don't suppose you can't tell. You can tell with perfect ease ; or, if you meet any mysterious personage of whom it proves difficult to ascertain whether he be rogue or not, keep clear of him till you know. With those whom you *know* to be honest, *know* to be innocent, *know* to be striving, with main purpose, to serve mankind and honour their God, you are humbly and lovingly to associate yourselves : and with none others.

"You don't like to set yourself up for being better than other people? You dare not judge harshly of your fellow-creatures?"

I do not tell you to judge them. I only tell you not to dine with them, and not to deal with them. That they lose the pleasure of your company, or the profit on your custom, is no crushing punishment. To their own Master they stand or fall; but to *your* Master, Christ,* *you* must stand, with your best might; and in this manner only, self-asserting as you may think it, can you confess Him before men. Why do you suppose that thundrous word of His impends over your denial of Him, "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before Angels," but because you are sure to be constantly tempted to such denial?

How, therefore, observe, in modern days, are you so tempted. Is not the temptation rather, *as it seems*, to confess Him? Is it difficult and shameful to go to church?—would it not require more courage to stay away? Is it difficult or shameful to shut your shop on Sunday, in the East,—or, to abstain from your ride in the Park on Sunday in the West? Is it dangerous to hold family worship in your house, or dishonourable to be seen with a cross on your Prayer Book? None of these modes or aspects of confession will bring

* I have got no Turks yet in the Company: when any join it, I will give them Koran enough for what I ask of them.

any outcry against you from the world. You will have its good word, on the contrary, for each and all of them. But declare that you mean to speak truth,—and speak it, for an hour; that you mean to abstain from luxury,—and abstain from it, for a day; that you, obeying God's law, will resolutely refuse fellowship with the disobedient;—and be 'not at home' to them, for a week: and hear *then* what the High Priests' servants will say to you, round the fire.

And observe, it is in charity for them, much more than by duty to others, that you are required to do this. For half, at least, of these Caiaphas' servants sin through pure ignorance, confirmed by custom. The essential difference in business, for instance, between a man of honour and a rogue, is that the first tries to give as *much* to his customer for his money as he can, and the second to give as *little*; but how many are at present engaged in business who are trying to sell their goods at as high a price as possible, supposing that effort to be the very soul and vital principle of business! Now by simply asserting to these ignorant persons that they *are* rogues, whether they know it or not; and that, in the present era of general enlightenment, gentlemen and ladies must not only learn to spell and to dance, but also to know the difference between cheating their neighbours and serving them; and that, as on the whole it is inexpedient to receive people who don't know how to express themselves grammatically, in the higher

circles of society, much more is it inexpedient to receive those who don't know how to behave themselves honestly. And by the mere assertion, practically, of this assured fact to your acquaintance's faces, by the direct intervention of a deal door between theirs and yours, you will startle them out of their Rogues' Paradise in a most healthful manner, and be the most orthodox and eloquent evangelical preacher to them that they have ever heard since they were born.

But all this must, of course, be done with extreme tenderness and modesty, though with absolute decision ; and under much submission to their elders by young people—especially those living in their fathers' houses. I shall not, of course, receive any Companions under age ; but already there are some names on my list of young unmarried women : and, while I have shown in all former writings that I hold the power of such to be the greatest, because the purest, of all social ones, I must as definitely now warn them against any manifestation of feeling or principle tending to break the unity of their home circles. They are bound to receive their father's friends as their own, and to comply in all sweet and subjected ways with the wishes and habits of their parents ; remaining calmly certain that the Law of God, for them, is that while they remain at home they shall be spirits of Peace and Humility beneath its roof. In all rightly ordered households, the confidence between the parent and child is such that in the event of a parent's wish

becoming contrary to a child's feeling of its general duty, there would be no fear or discomfort on the child's part in expressing its thoughts. The moment these are necessarily repressed, there is wrong somewhere; and in houses ordered according to the ways of modern fashionable life, there *must* be wrong, often, and everywhere. But the main curse of modern society is that, beginning by training its youth to be 'independent' and disobedient, this carefully cultivated independence shows itself, of course, by rejecting whatever is noble and honourable in their fathers' houses, and never by healing or atoning what is faultful.

Of all St. George's young Companions, therefore, he requires first the graces of gentleness and humility; nor, on the whole, much independent action of any kind; but only the quiet resolve to find out what is absolutely right, and, so far as it may be kindly and inoffensively practised, to fulfil it, at home; and so far as it may be modestly and decorously uttered, to express the same abroad. And a well-bred young lady has always personal power enough of favour and discouragement, among persons of her own age, to satisfy the extremest demands of conscience in this direction.

And now let me see what room I have left for talk of present matters. Here is a piece printed a fortnight since, which I can't be plagued to keep in type till next month.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
8th February, 1876.

I am fifty-seven to-day: and may perhaps be allowed to talk a little of myself.

Among several pretty love-letters from my pets, which only makes me sorrier that I'm fifty-seven—but I really don't think some of the letters could be nicer if I were only twenty-seven—there's one with a ghost story in it, more precious to me than all the others, seeing I draw more quickly* near, now, daily, to the Loyal land.

I may as well write it as I read, thus:

"I heard such a pretty story last night of something that happened at a school in Germany, not long since. It was the custom of one of the masters to go round every night to the dormitories to see that the boys were asleep, all right. One night he was astonished to see a lady go up to one of the boys, stoop over him and kiss him, and then vanish. Next morning, news came that the mother of that particular boy had died at the time. Isn't it lovely? Even A. believes that."

Yes; and A. does wisely; and so may B., and C.: but yet I should much like to know *what* particular boy, in what particular school in Germany.

Nevertheless, the story has more value for me because it is written to me by a person who herself saw the shade—or rather light—of her sister, at the time of that sister's death on the other side of the

Every day taking more away than the one before it.

world ; being a member of that branch of my family in which some gift of the Scottish second sight remains, inherited by my paternal grandmother, who ran away with my paternal grandfather when she was not quite sixteen ; and my aunt Jessie, (my father's only sister,) was born a year afterwards ; a few weeks after which event, my grandmother, not yet seventeen, was surprised, (by a friend who came into her room unannounced,) dancing a threesome reel, with two chairs for her partners, she having found at the moment no other way of adequately expressing the pleasure she took in this mortal life, and its gifts, and promises.

The latter failed somewhat afterwards ; and my aunt Jessie, a very precious and perfect creature, beautiful in her dark-eyed, Highland way, utterly religious, in her quiet Puritan way, and very submissive to Fates mostly unkind, married, or was married to—I never could make out exactly which, or why,—a somewhat rough tanner, with a fairly good business, in the good town of Perth ; and, when I was old enough to be taken first to visit them, as aforesaid, my aunt and my uncle the tanner lived in a good square-built gray stone house at the 'Bridge-End' of Perth, some fifty yards north of the bridge ; their garden sloping steeply to the Tay, which eddied, 'three or four feet deep of sombre crystal, round the steps where the servants dipped their pails.

An aggrieved correspondent thought to cure me with her delicate 'Fie,' of what she supposed my

coarse habit of sneering at people of no ancestry. I have it not; yet might have fallen into it in my youth, for I remember now, with more grief and shame than I can speak, being once ashamed of my own father and mother in Mr. Ryman's shop here in Oxford; nor am I entirely at ease, at this moment, in writing of my uncles the baker and the tanner; yet my readers may trust me when I tell them that, in now remembering my dreams in the house of the entirely honest chief baker of Market Street, Croydon; and of Peter—not Simon—the tanner, whose house was by the riverside of Perth, I would not change the dreams, far less the tender realities, of those early days, for anything I hear now remembered by lords or dames, of their days of childhood in castle halls, and by sweet lawns and lakes in park-walled forest.

I do not mean this for a republican sentiment; quite the opposite. I hate republicans, as I do all other manner of fools. I love Lords and Ladies, (especially unmarried ones, with beautiful three-syllabled Christian-names. I know a simple two-syllabled one, also, very charming); and Earls, and Countesses, and Marquises and Marchionesses, and Honourables, and Sirs; and I bow down before them and worship them, in the way that Mr. Thackeray thought 'snobs' did: 'he never perceiving with all the wit of him, (being mostly spent in mean smell-fungus work which spoiled its scent,) that it is *himself* the snob truly worships, all the time, and not the Lord he looks at. But my way

of worship was Walter Scott's, which my father taught me (always excepting such recreance as that in Mr. Ryman's shop). And therefore, when I say I would not change my dreams of Market Street, and Bridge End, and Rose Terrace, (where we used to live after my uncle died, briefly apoplectic, at Bridge End,) for anything that the Palatial and Maxime-Pontifical abodes of Nobles and Bishops give them—I mean simply that I had a home, being a child, and loved it, and did not then, and do not now, covet my neighbour's house :* but cling to every likeness findable in these ruinous days to the places of peace given me in that lowly time.

Peace, and the knowledge of God it gave me. For, by the way, observe in that sacredest of benedictions, which my Dean gave me in my own cathedral last Sunday, (I being an honorary student of Christ Church ;—and there *are* only eight, if you please to look in the Oxford Calendar,) “ The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God ; ”—observe, I say, for we do not always think of this, it is not the knowledge that is to give peace, but the peace which is to give knowledge ; so that as long as we fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness, and bite and devour one another, and are consumed one of another—every traveller paying an eight per cent. tax in his fare, for dividend to a consuming railroad company

* Compare Letter XXI., Vol I., p 415.

—we can't know anything about God at all. And compare again 'Eagle's Nest,' §§ 195, 204-206.

There, then, at Rose Terrace, I lived in peace in the fair Scotch summer days, with my widowed aunt, and my little cousin Jessie, then traversing a bright space between her sixth and ninth year; dark-eyed deeply, like her mother, and similarly pious; and she and I used to compete in the Sunday evening Scriptural examinations; and be as proud as two little peacocks because Jessie's elder brothers, and sister Mary, used to get 'put down,' and either Jessie or I was always 'Dux.' We agreed upon this that we would be married, when we were a little older; not considering it preparatorily necessary to be in any degree wiser.

9th February.

I couldn't go on about my cousin Jessie, for I was interrupted by the second post with more birthday compliments, from young ladies now about Jessie's age—letters which of course required immediate answer,—some also with flowers, which required to be immediately put into water, and greatly worried me by upsetting themselves among my books all day afterwards; but I let myself be worried, for love;—and, from a well-meaning and kindly feeling friend, some very respectful and respectable poetry, beautifully written, (and I read part of it, for love, but I had much rather he had sent me sixpence, for I hate poetry, mostly, and love pence, always); and to-day, half-past seven

before chapel, my mind is otherwise set altogether, for I am reading Leviticus carefully now, for my life of Moses; and, in working out the law of the feast of harvest, chanced on the notable verse, xxiii. 24: "In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation;" and then flashed on me, all in a minute, the real meaning of Holbein's introduction to the Dance of Death, (the third woodcut in the first edition,) which till this moment I only took for his own symbol of the Triumph of Death, adopted from Orcagna and others, but which I see now, in an instant, to be the *un*-Holy Convocation; the gathering together to their temple of the Tribes of Death, and the blowing of trumpets on their solemn feast day, and sabbath of rest to the weary in evil doing.

And, busy friends, in the midst of all your charming preparations for the Spring season, you will do well to take some method of seeing that design, and meditating, with its help, upon the grave question, what kind of weariness *you* will have to rest from. My own thoughts of it are disturbed, as I look, by that drummer-death, in front, with his rattling and ringing kettledrums (*he* the chief Musician in the Psalm for the sons of Korah—Dathan and Abiram, because his sounding is on Skin with sticks of Bone,) not always because of my general interest in drummers, but because, after being much impressed, when I was a child, by the verses I had to learn about the last trump,

out of the 15th of 1st Corinthians,—when I became a man, and put away childish things, I used often to wonder what we should all say of any sacred Saga among poor Indians whose untutored mind sees God in clouds, if it told them that they were all to rise from the dead at the sound of the last drum.

And here I'm interrupted again by a delightful letter about the resurrection of snails, Atropos really managing matters, at present, like the daintiest and watchfullest housewife for me,—everything in its place, and under my hand

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—As I have just read the last part of February ‘Fors,’ I want to say what I know about the little shells—(*Helix virgata*—I suppose). I think—indeed, am pretty sure, nearly, if not quite, all those shells had little live snails in them. I have found them in quantities on the South Downs near Lewes, on Roundway Hill near Devizes, near Lyme Regis, in North Wales; and before any of those places, on our own Hampton Common in Gloucestershire, where my sisters and myself used to gather those and other pretty ones when we were children. If you have any stored by, in a few months I think you will find them (if not shut up) walk away.

“When I was a girl I once had to choose a birthday present from one of my aunts, and asked for ‘Turton’s British Shells,’ for I always wanted to know the name and history of everything I found; then I collected all the land and freshwater shells I could find, as I could not get sea shells—one of my longings—for I never saw the sea till after I was twenty, except for a few hours at

Munsley in Norfolk, when I was eight years old. I have my little shells still ; and have four or five varieties of *Helix virgata* : I think the number of rings increases as the shell goes on growing.

“‘In the autumn these shells are often suddenly observed in such great numbers as to give rise to the popular notion of their having fallen from the clouds. This shell is very hardy, and appears nearly insensible to cold, as it does not hybernate even when the ground is covered with snow.’

“I always fancied the Lord let them lie about in such numbers to be food for some little birds, or may be rooks and starlings, robins, etc., in cold weather when there was so little to eat.

“I dare say you know how the blackbirds and thrushes eat the larger snails. I have often seen in the woods a very pretty coloured shell lying on a white stone,—the birds had put it there to crack a hole in it and to take out the snail. The shell looked such a pretty clear colour because it was alive, and yet empty.”

Yes ; the Holy Ghost of Life, not yet finally departed, can still give fair colours even to an empty shell. Evangelical friends,—worms, as you have long called yourselves, here is a deeper expression of humility suggested possible : may not some of you be only painted shells of worms,—alive, yet empty ?

Assuming my shell to be *Helix virgata*, I take down my magnificent French—(let me see if I can write its title without a mistake)—‘*Manuel de Conchyliologie et de Paléontologie Conchyliologique*,’ or, in English, ‘Manual of Shell-talking and

Old-body-talking in a Shell-talking manner.' Eight hundred largest octavo—more like folio—pages of close print, with four thousand and odd (nearly five thousand) exquisite engravings of shells; and among them I look for the creatures elegantly, but inaccurately, called by modern naturalists Gasteropods; in English, Belly-feet, (meaning, of course, to say Belly-walkers, for they haven't got any feet); and among these I find, with much pains, one that is rather like mine, of which I am told that it belongs to the sixteenth sort in the second tribe of the second family of the first sub-order of the second order of the Belly-walkers, and that it is called 'Adeorbis subcarinatus,'—Adeorbis by Mr. Wood, and subcarinatus by Mr. Montagu; but I am not told where it is found, nor what sort of creature lives in it, nor any single thing whatever about it, except that it is 'sufficiently depressed' ('assez déprimée'), and 'deeply enough navelled' ('assez profondement ombiliquée,'—but how on earth can I tell when a shell is navelled to a depth, in the author's opinion, satisfactory?) and that the turns (taken by the family), are 'little numerous' ('peu nombreux'). On the whole, I am not disposed to think my shell is here described, and put my splendid book in its place again.

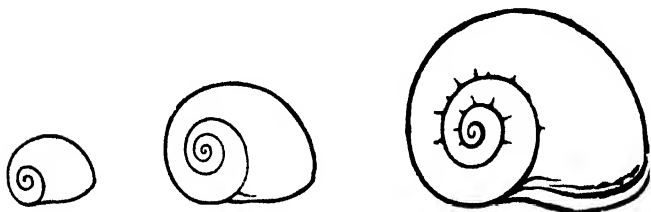
I next tried my English Cuvier, in sixteen octavo volumes; in which I find no notice whatever taken of these minor snails, except a list of thirty-three species, finishing with an etc.; out of which I mark 'Cretacea,' 'Terrestris,' and 'Nivea,' as perhaps

likely to fit mine ; and then I cōme, by order of Atropos, on this amazing account of the domestic arrangements of a little French snail, ' *Helix decollata* ' (Guillotined snail ?) with references to ' *Cm. Chemn. cxxxvi. 1254-1257*,' a species which "has the singular habit of successively fracturing the whorls at the top, (origin, that is,—snails building their houses from heaven towards earth,) of the spire, so that at a particular epoch, of all the whorls of the spire originally possessed by this bulimus, not a single one remains." Bulimus,—what's a bulimus ? *Helix* is certainly a screw, and bulimus—in my Riddle's dictionary—is said to be 'empty-bellied.' Then this French snail, revolutionary in the manner of a screw, appears to be a belly-walker with an empty belly, and no neck,—who literally 'breaks up' his establishment every year ! Query—breaks ? or melts ? Confraction, or confusion ?

I must put my fine English book back in its place, too ;—but here, at last, comes a 'work of light' to help us, from my favourite pupil, who was out with me that day on the Downs, and nearly killed himself with keeping a fox in sight on foot, up and down them ;—happily surviving, he has pursued the slower creature for me to its cave of silver earth ; and writes thus.

"I have sent you two little boxes—one containing common garden snail shells of various ages, and the other black striped Down shells ; and you will see that in Box 1 the full-grown ones, with the strong finished lip, have four whorls each, and all the full-grown garden shells

I have noticed had the same number, though they varied a little in size. The next largest in the box have only three and a half turns, but if they had lived longer they would have added on another half turn, bigger than all the rest of the shell put together. In fact, if one looks at this shell, one sees that any half whorl is half as large again as all the rest of the shell before it. Then, besides these, there are four or five younger shells, the smallest of which has only two and a half whorls, which exactly correspond to two and a half whorls taken from



any of the larger shells ; so I think we may conclude that a shell grows by adding on *length only* to the large end of a tapering tube, like a dunce's cap, which, however, is curled up like a ram's horn, to look prettier, take up less room, and allow the occupant to beat a retreat round the corner when a robin comes. By-the-bye, I wonder some birds don't grow bills like corkscrews, to get at the snails with.

"Then in box No. 2 there are several black striped Down shells, and the full-grown ones have six whorls, and the smallest ones, which died young, some four and some five, according to age ; but the dunce's cap is longer, and so there are more whorls.

"I couldn't get these facts clearly stated in two handbooks which I read. I suppose they took it for

granted that one knew ; but I found, what after all would lead one to infer the rest, that the young snail at birth corresponds to the colourless APEX of the shell, and that the colour only comes in that part which grows under the influence of light and air."

" Wednesday, Feb. 9.

" Another fact is, that all the shells I ever remember looking at grow in the direction of the sun.

" Another fact. Since the shells have been in this room, my chimneypiece has been full of sleepy, small, long-bodied spiders, which had gone to sleep for the winter in these black and white caverns, out of the reach of flocks of half-starved larks and starlings."

I drew the three advancing stages of the common snail's houses, thus sent me, forthwith ; and Mr. Burgess swiftly and rightly engraves them. Note that the apparent irregularities in the spirals are conditions of perspective, necessarily affecting the deeply projecting forms ; note also that each whorl is partly hidden by the subsequent one, built with its edge lapping over it ; and finally, that there is really, I believe, a modification, to some extent, and enlargement, of the inner whorls ; until the domestic creature is satisfied with its length of cave, and expresses its rest in accomplished labour and full age, by putting that binding lip round its border, and term to its hope.

Wherein, building for the earth, we may wisely imitate it. Of other building, not with slime for mortar, yet heavenward, we may perhaps conceive in due time.

LETTER LXIV

THE THREE SARCOPHAGI

I WILL begin my letter to-day with our Bible lesson, out of which other necessary lessons will spring. We must take the remaining three sons of Ham together, in relation to each other and to Israel.

Mizraim, the Egyptian; Phut, the Ethiopian; Sidon, the Sidonian: or, in breadth of meaning the three African powers,—A, of the watered plain, B, of the desert, and C, of the sea; the latter throning itself on the opposite rocks of Tyre, and returning to culminate in Carthage.

A. Egypt is essentially the Hamite slavish *strength* of body and intellect.

B. Ethiopia, the Hamite slavish *affliction* of body and intellect; condemnation of the darkened race that can no more change its skin than the leopard its spots; yet capable, in its desolation, of nobleness. Read the "What doth hinder me to be baptized?—If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest" of the Acts; and after that the description in the *Daily Telegraph* (first Monday of March), of the Nubian king, with his sword and

his Bible at his right hand, and the tame lioness with her cubs, for his playmates, at his left.

C. Tyre is the Hamite slavish *pleasure* of sensual and idolatrous art, clothing her nakedness with sea purple. She is lady of all beautiful carnal pride, and of the commerce that feeds it,—her power over the Israelite being to beguile, or help for pay, as Hiram.

But Ethiopia and Tyre are always connected with each other: Tyre, the queen of commerce; Ethiopia, her gold-bringing slave; the redemption of these being Christ's utmost victory. "They of Tyre, with the Morians—*there*, even *there*, was He born." "Then shall princes come out of Egypt, and Ethiopia stretch forth her hands unto God." "He shall let go my captives, not for price; and the *labour* of Egypt, and *merchandise* of Ethiopia, shall come over unto thee, and shall be thine." *

Learn now, after the fifteenth, also the sixteenth verse of Genesis x., and read the fifteenth chapter with extreme care. If you have a good memory, learn it by heart from beginning to end; it is one of the most sublime and pregnant passages in the entire compass of ancient literature.

Then understand generally that the spiritual meaning of Egyptian slavery is *labour without hope*,

* Psalm lxviii. 31; lxxxiii 7 and 8; lxxxvii. 4; Isaiah xlv 14 I am not sure of my interpretation of the 87th Psalm; but, as far as any significance exists in it to our present knowledge, it can only be of the power of the Nativity of Christ to save Rahab [*i.e.*, Egypt, the 'monster,' crocodile], Philistia the giant, Tyre the trader, and Ethiopia the slave.

but having all the reward, and all the safety of labour absolute. Its beginning is to discipline and adorn the body,—its end is to embalm the body; its religion is first to restrain, then to judge, “whatsoever things are done in the body, whether they be good or evil.” Therefore, whatever may be well done by measure and weight,—what force may be in geometry, mechanism, and agriculture, bodily exercise, and dress; reverent esteem of earthly birds, and beasts, and vegetables; reverent preparation of pottage, good with flesh;—these shall Egypt teach and practise, to her much comfort and power. “And when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt he called his sons.”

And now remember the scene at the threshing floor of Atad (Gen. 50th, 10 and 11).

“A grievous mourning.” They embalmed Jacob. They put him in a coffin. They dutifully bore him home, for his son's sake. Whatsoever may well be done of earthly deed, they do by him and his race. And the end of it all, for *them*, is a grievous mourning.

Then, for corollary, remember,—all fear of death, and embalming of death, and contemplating of death, and mourning for death, is the pure bondage of Egypt.

And whatsoever is formal, literal, miserable, material, in the deeds of human life, is the preparatory bondage of Egypt; of which, nevertheless, some formalism, some literalism, some misery, and some flesh-pot comfort, will always be needful for

the education of such beasts as we are. So that, though, when Israel was a child, God loved him, and called his son out of Egypt, He preparatorily sent him *into* Egypt. And the first deliverer of Israel had to know the wisdom of Egypt before the wisdom of Arabia; and for the last deliverer of Israel, the dawn of infant thought, and the first vision of the earth He came to save, was under the palms of Nile.

Now, therefore, also for all of us, Christians in our nascent state of muddy childhood, when Professor Huxley is asking ironically, 'Has a frog a soul?' and scientifically directing young ladies to cut out frogs' stomachs to see if they can find it,—whatsoever, I say, in our necessary education among that scientific slime of Nile, is formal, literal, miserable, and material, is necessarily Egyptian.

As, for instance, brickmaking, scripture, flogging, and cooking,—upon which four heads of necessary art I take leave to descant a little.

And first of brickmaking. Every following day the beautiful arrangements of modern political economists, obeying the law of covetousness instead of the law of God, send me more letters from gentlemen and ladies asking me 'how they are to live?'

Well, my refined friends, you will find it needful to live, if it be with success, according to God's Law; and to love that law, and make it your meditation all the day. And the first uttered article in it is, "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread."

"But you don't really expect us to work with our hands, and make ourselves hot?"

Why, who, in the name of Him who made you, are you then, that you shouldn't? Have you got past the flaming sword, back into Eden; and is your celestial opinion, there, that we miserable Egyptians are to work outside, here, for *your* dinners, and hand them through the wall to you at a tourniquet? or, as being yet true servants of the devil, while you are blessed, dish it up to you, spiritually hot, through a trap-door?

Fine anti-slavery people you are, forsooth! who think it is right not only to make slaves, but *accursed* slaves, of other people, that you may slip your dainty necks out of the collar!

"Ah, but we thought Christ's yoke had *no* collar!"

It is time to know better. There may come a day, indeed, when there shall be no more curse;—in the meantime, you must be humble and honest enough to take your share of it.

So what *can* you do, that's useful? Not to ask too much at first; and, since we are now coming to particulars, addressing myself first to gentlemen,—Do you think you can make a brick, or a tile?

You rather think not? Well, if you are healthy, and fit for work, and can do nothing better,—go and learn.

You would rather not? Very possibly: but you can't have your dinner unless you do. And why would you so much rather not?

"So ungentlemanly!"

No ; to beg your dinner, or steal it, is ungentlemanly. But there is nothing ungentlemanly, that I know of, in beating clay, and putting it in a mould.

“ But my wife wouldn’t like it ! ”

Well, that’s a strong reason : you shouldn’t vex your wife, if you can help it ; but why will she be vexed ? If she is a nice English girl, she has pretty surely been repeating to herself, with great unction, for some years back, that highly popular verse,—

“ The trivial round, the common task,
Will give us all we ought to ask,—
Room to deny ourselves ; a road
To bring us daily nearer God ”

And this, which I recommend, is not a trivial round, but an important square, of human business ; and will certainly supply any quantity of room to deny yourselves in ; and will bring you quite as near God as, for instance, writing lawyers’ letters to make appointments, and charging five shillings each for them. The only difference will be that, instead of getting five shillings for writing a letter, you will only get it for a day and a half’s sweat of the brow.

“ Oh, but my wife didn’t mean *that* sort of ‘ common task ’ at all ! ”

No ; but your wife didn’t know what she meant ; neither did Mr. Keble. Women and clergymen have so long been in the habit of using pretty words without ever troubling themselves to understand

them, that they now revolt from the effort, as if it were an impiety. So far as your wife had any meaning at all, it was that until she was made an angel of, and had nothing to do but be happy, and sing her flattering opinions of God for evermore,—dressing herself and her children becomingly, and leaving cards on her acquaintances, were sufficiently acceptable services to Him, for which, trivial though they were, He would reward her with immediate dinner, and everlasting glory. That was your wife's real notion of the matter, and modern Christian women's generally, so far as they have got any notions at all under their bonnets, and the skins of the dead robins they have stuck in them,—the disgusting little savages. But that is by no means the way in which either your hands are to be delivered from making the pots, or her head from carrying them.

Oh, but you will do it by deputy, and by help of capital, will you? Here is the Grand Junction Canal Brick, Tile, and Sanitary Pipe Company, Limited; Capital, £50,000, in 10,000 shares of £5 each; “formed for the purpose of purchasing and working an estate comprising fifty-eight acres of land known as the ‘Millpost Field,’ and ‘The Duddles,’ situate at Southall, in the county of Middlesex.” You will sit at home, serene proprietor, not able, still less willing, to lift so much as a spadeful of Duddles yourself; but you will feed a certain number of brickmaking Ethiopian slaves thereon, as cheap as you can; and teach them to

make bricks, as basely as they can ; and you will put the meat out of their mouths into your own, and provide for their eternal salvation by gracious ministries from Uxbridge. A clerical friend of mine in that neighbourhood has, I hear, been greatly afflicted concerning the degenerate natures of brick-makers. Let him go and make, and burn, a pile or two with his own hands ; he will thereby receive apocalyptic visions of a nature novel to his soul. And if he ever succeeds in making one good brick, (the clay must lie fallow in wind and sun two years before you touch it, my master Carlyle tells me,) he will have done a good deed for his generation which will be acknowledged in its day by the Stone of Israel, when the words of many a sermon will be counted against their utterers, every syllable as mere insolent breaking of the third commandment.

In the meantime, it seems that no gracious ministries from Uxbridge, or elsewhere, can redeem this untoward generation of brickmakers. Like the navvies of Furness, (Letter XI., Vol. I., p. 210,) they are a fallen race, fit for nothing but to have dividends got out of them, and then be damned. My fine-lady friends resign themselves pacifically to that necessity, though greatly excited, I perceive, at present, concerning vivisection. In which warmth of feeling they are perfectly right, if they would only also remember that England is spending some thirty millions of pounds a year in making machines for the vivisection, not of dogs, but men ; nor is this expenditure at all for anatomical purposes ;

but, in the real root of it, merely to maintain the gentlemanly profession of the Army, and the ingenious profession of Engineers.

Oh, but we don't want to live by soldiering, any more than by brickmaking; behold, we are intellectual persons, and wish to live by literature.

Well, it is a slavish trade,—true Hamite; nevertheless, if we will learn our elements in true Egyptian bondage, some good may come of it.

For observe, my literary friends, the essential function of the slavish Egyptian, in the arts of the world, is to lose the picture in the letter; as the essential function of the Eleutherian Goth is to illuminate the letter into the picture.

The Egyptian is therefore the scribe of scribes,—the supremely literary person of earth. The banks of Nile give him his rock volume: the reeds of Nile his paper roll. With cleaving chisel, and cloven reed, he writes thereon, exemplarily: the ark which his princess found among the paper reeds, is the true beginning of libraries,—Alexandrian, and all other. What you call Scripture, in special, coming out of it; the first portion written in Egyptian manner, (it is said,) with the finger of God. Scribe and lawyer alike have too long forgotten the lesson,—come now and learn it again, of Theuth, with the ibis beak.*

When next you are in London on a sunny morning, take leisure to walk into the old Egyptian

* Letter XVII. (Vol. I., p. 334).

gallery of the British Museum, after traversing which for a third of its length, you will find yourself in the midst of a group of four massy sarcophagi,—two on your left, two on your right. Assume that they are represented by the letters below, and that you are walking in the direction of the arrow, so that you have the sarcophagi A and B on your left, and the sarcophagi C and D on your right.

The sarcophagus A is a king's; B, a scribe's; C, a queen's; and D, a priest's.

A is of a grand basaltic rock with veins full of agates, and white onyx,—the most wonderful piece of crag I know; B and C are of grey porphyry; D of red granite.

The official information concerning sarcophagus A, (Nectabenes,) is to the effect that it dates from the 30th dynasty, or about 380 B.C.

B, (Hapimen,) of the 26th dynasty, or about 525.

C, (the queen's,) of the same dynasty and period.

D, (Naskatu,) of the 27th dynasty, or about 500 B.C.

The three sarcophagi, then, B, C, and D, were (we are told,) cut exactly at the time when, beyond the North Sea, Greek art, just before Marathon, was at its grandest.

And if you look under the opened lid of the queen's, you will see at the bottom of it the outline portrait, or rather symbol, of her, engraved, with

the hawk for her crest, signifying what hope of immortality or power after death remained to her.

But the manner of the engraving you must observe. This is all that the Egyptian Holbein could do on stone, after a thousand years at least of practised art ; while the Greeks, who had little more than begun only two hundred years before, were already near to the strength of carving their Theseus, perfect for all time.

This is the Hamite bondage in Art : of which the causes will teach themselves to us as we work, ourselves. Slavery is good for us in the beginning, and for writing-masters we can find no better than these Mizraimites : see what rich lines of Scripture there are, along the black edges of those tombs. To understand at all how well they are done, we must at once begin to do the like, in some sort, ourselves.

By the exercise given in Fors of January, if you have practised it, you have learned something of what is meant by merit and demerit in a pure line, however produced. We must now consider of our tools a little.

You can make a mark upon things in three ways—namely, by scratching them, painting on them with a brush, or letting liquid run on them out of a pen. Pencil or chalk marks are merely a kind of coarse painting with dry material.

The primitive and simplest mark is the scratch or cut, which shall be our first mode of experiment. Take a somewhat blunt penknife, and a composition

*candle ; and scratch or cut a fine line on it with the point of the knife, drawing the sharp edge of the knife towards you.

• Examine the trace produced through a magnifying glass, and you will find it is an angular ditch with a little ridge raised at its side or sides, pressed out of it.

Next, scratch the candle with the point of the knife, turning the side of the blade forwards : you will now cut a broader furrow, but the wax or composition will rise out of it before the knife in a beautiful spiral shaving, formed like the most lovely little crimped or gathered frill ; which I've been trying to draw, but can't ; and if *you* can, you will be far on the way to drawing spiral staircases, and many other pretty things.

Nobody, so far as I have myself read, has yet clearly explained why a wood shaving, or continuously driven portion of detached substance, should thus take a spiral course ; nor why a substance like wax or water, capable of yielding to pressure, should rise or fall under a steady force in successive undulations. Leaving these questions for another time, observe that the first furrow, with the ridge at its side, represents the entire group of incised lines ploughed in soft grounds, the head of them all being the plough furrow itself. And the line produced by the flat side of the knife is the type of those produced by complete *excision*, the true engraver's.

Next, instead of wax, take a surface of wood, and, drawing first as deep and steady a furrow in

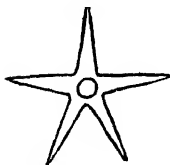
it as you can with the edge of the knife, proceed to* deepen it by successive cuts.

You will, of course, find that you must cut from the two sides, sloping to the middle, forming always a deeper angular ditch; but you will have difficulty in clearing all out neatly at the two ends.

And if you think of it, you will perceive that the simplest conceivable excision of a clear and neat kind must be that produced by three cuts given triangularly.* For though you can't clear out the hollow with two touches, you need not involve yourself in the complexity of four.

And unless you take great pains in keeping the three sides of this triangle equal, two will be longer than the third. So the type of the primitive incised mark is what grand persons call 'cuneiform'—wedge-shaped.

If you cut five such cuneiform incisions in a star group, thus, with a little circle connecting them in the middle,



you will have the element of the decorative upper border both on the scribe's coffin and the queen's. You will also have an elementary picture of a starfish—or the portrait of

* You may indeed dip softly into the ground and rise gradually out of it; but this will give you not a clear, but an infinitely graduated excision, exquisite in drawing, but not good for writing.

* You will see, however, on the sarcophagi that the rays are not equidistant, but arranged so as to express vertical position,—of that afterwards; to-day observe only the manner of their cutting; and then on a flat surface of porphyry,—do the like yourself.*

You don't know what porphyry is—nor where to get it? Write to Mr. Tennant, 149 Strand,† and he will send you a little bit as cheap as he can. Then you must get a little vice to fix it, and a sharp-pointed little chisel, and a well-poised little hammer; and, when you have cut your asterisk, you will know more about Egypt than nine hundred and ninety-nine people out of a thousand,—Oxford scholars and all. Awaiting the result of your experiment, I proceed to the other instrument of writing, the reed, or pen.

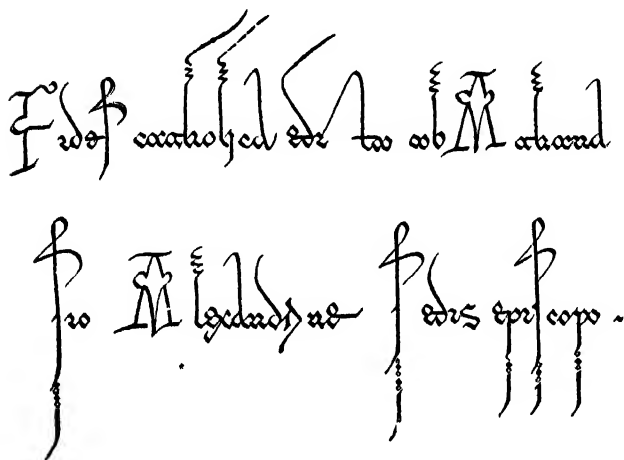
Of which the essential power is that it can make a narrow stroke sideways, and a broad one when you press it open.

Now our own current writing, I told you, is to be equal in thickness of line. You will find that method the quickest and serviceablest. But in quite beautiful writing, the power of the pen is to be exhibited with decision; and of its purest and delicatest exertion, you will see the result on page 310; facsimile by Mr. Burgess, from a

* The circle in the middle is to be left solid; the rays round are to be cut quite shallow; not in deep furrows, as in wood, but like rising, sharp, cliff-edged harbours with flat bottoms of sand; as little of the hard rock being cut away as may be.

† [Thus in the original edition of 1876.—Ed.]

piece of Lombardic writing, of about the eleventh century,—(I shall not say where the original is, because I don't want it to be fingered)—which the scribe has entirely delighted in doing, and of which every line and touch is perfect in its kind. Copy it, with what precision you can; for in its perfect



uprightness, and exquisite use of the diamond-shaped touches obtained by mere pressure on the point, it is a model not to be surpassed; standing precisely half-way between old Latin letters and mediæval Gothic.* The legend of it is—

“Fides catholica edita ab Athana-
sio Alexandrie sedis episcopo”

* [As it has been found impracticable to reproduce the hand-coloured plate as it appeared in the original edition, a few remarks on the colour have been omitted.—ED.]

Towards the better understanding of which Catholic faith, another step may be made, if you will, by sending to Mr. Ward for the Etruscan Leucothea,* with Dionysus on her knees, which also stands just half-way in imagination, though only a quarter of the way in time, between the Egyptian Madonna, (Isis with Horus,) of fifteen hundred years before Christ, and the Florentine Madonna by Lippi, fifteen hundred years after Christ. Lippi, being true-bred Etruscan, simply raises the old sculpture into pure and sacred life, retaining all its forms, even to the spiral of the throne ornament, and the transgression of the figures on the bordering frame, acknowledging, in this subjection to the thoughts and laws of his ancestors, a nobler Catholic Faith than Athanasius wrote: faith, namely, in that one Lord by whose breath, from the beginning of creation, the children of men are born; and into whose hands, dying, they give up their spirit.

This photograph of Etruscan art is therefore to be the second of our possessions, and means of study; affording us at once elements of art-practice in many directions, according to our strength; and as we began with drawing the beads of cap, and spiral of chair, in the Lippi, rather than the Madonna, so here it will be well to be sure we can draw the throne, before we try the Leucothea.

* I take the title of this relief from Mr. Parker's catalogue, not being certain of the subject myself, and rather conceiving it to be Latona with Apollo. [Mr. Ward's address is 2 Church Terrace, Richmond.—ED.]

Outline it first by the eye, then trace the original, to correct your drawing; and by the time next Fors comes out, I hope your power of drawing a fine curve, like that of the back of this throne, will be materially increased; by that time also I shall have got spirals to compare with these Etruscan ones, drawn from shells only an hour or two old, sent me by my good friend Mr. Sillar, (who taught me the wrongness of the infinite spiral of money interest,) by which I am at present utterly puzzled, finding our conclusions in last Fors on this point of zoology quite wrong; and that the little snails have no less twisted houses than the large.

LETTER LXV

THE MOUNT OF THE AMORITES

I TOLD you in last Fors to learn the 15th chapter of Genesis by heart. Too probably, you have done nothing of the sort ; but, at any rate, let us now read it together, that I may tell you, of each verse, what I wanted (and still beg) you to learn it for.

1. "The word of God came to Abram." Of course you can't imagine such a thing as that the word of God should ever come to *you* ? Is that because you are worse, or better, than Abram ?—because you are a more, or less, civilized person than he ? I leave you to answer that question for yourself ;—only as I have told you often before, but cannot repeat too often, find out first what the Word *is* ; and don't suppose that the printed thing in your hand, which you call a Bible, is the Word of God, and that the said Word may therefore always be bought at a pious stationer's for eighteen-pence.

Farther, in the "Explanatory and Critical Commentary and Revision of the Translation" (of the Holy Bible) by Bishops and other Clergy of the Established Church, published in 1871, by Mr.

John Murray, you will find the interesting statement, respecting this verse, that "This is the first time that the expression—so frequent afterwards—'The Word of the Lord' occurs in the Bible." The expression *is* certainly rather frequent afterwards; and one might have perhaps expected from the Episcopal and clerical commentators, on this, its first occurrence, some slight notice of the probable meaning of it. They proceed, however, without farther observation, to discuss certain problems, suggested to them by the account of Abram's vision, respecting somnambulism; on which, though one would have thought few persons more qualified than themselves to give an account of that condition, they arrive at no particular conclusion.

But even their so carefully limited statement is only one-third true. It is true of the Hebrew Law; not of the New Testament:—of the entire Bible, it is true of the English version only; not of the Latin, nor the Greek. Nay, it is very importantly and notably *untrue* of those earlier versions.

There are three words in Latin, expressive of utterance in three very different manners; namely, 'verbum,' a word, 'vox,' a voice, and 'sermo,' a sermon.

Now, in the Latin Bible, when St. John says "the Word was in the beginning," he says the 'Verbum' was in the beginning. But here, when somebody (nobody knows who, and that is a bye question of some importance,) is represented as

saying, 'the word of the Lord came to Abram,' what somebody really says is that "There was made to Abram a 'Sermon' of the Lord."

Does it not seem possible that one of the almost unconscious reasons of your clergy for not pointing out this difference in expression, may be a doubt whether you ought not rather to desire to hear God preach, than them?

But the Latin word 'verbum,' from which you get 'verbal' and 'verbosity,' is a very obscure and imperfect rendering of the great Greek word 'Logos,' from which you get 'logic,' and 'theology,' and all the other logies.

And the phrase "word of the Lord," which the Bishops, with unusual episcopic clairvoyance, have really observed to 'occur frequently afterwards' in the English Bible, is, in the Greek Bible, always "the Logos of the Lord." But this Sermon to Abraham is only 'rhema,' an actual or mere *word*; in his interpretation of which, I see, my good Dean of Christ Church quotes the Greek original of Sancho's proverb, "Fair words butter no parsnips." Which we shall presently see to have been precisely Abram's—(of course cautiously expressed)—feeling, on this occasion. But to understand his feeling, we must look what this sermon of the Lord's was.

The sermon (as reported) was kind, and clear. "Fear not, Abram, I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward," ('reward' being the poetical English of our translators—the real phrase

being 'thy exceeding great pay, or gain'). Meaning, "You needn't make an iron tent, with a revolving gun in the middle of it, for I am your tent and artillery in one; and you needn't care to get a quantity of property, for *I* am your property; and you needn't be stiff about your rights of property, because nobody will dispute your right to *Me*."

To which Abram answers, "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless?"

Meaning,—“Yes, I know that;—but what is the good of *You* to me, if I haven't a child? I am a poor mortal: I don't care about the Heavens or You; I want a child.”

Meaning this, at least, if the Latin and English Bibles are right in their translation—“*I* am thy great gain.” But the Greek Bible differs from them; and puts the promise in a much more tempting form to the modern English mind. It does not represent God as offering Himself; but something far better than Himself, actually exchangeable property! Wealth, according to Mr. John Stuart Mill. Here is indeed a prospect for Abram!—and something to refuse, worth thinking twice about. For the Septuagint reads, “Fear not, Abram. I am thy Protector, and *thou shalt have* an exceeding great pay.” Practically, just as if, supposing Sir Stafford Northcote to represent the English nation of the glorious future, a Sermon of the Lord should come just now to him, saying, “Fear not, Sir Stafford, I am thy Devastation; and thou shalt have an exceeding great surplus.”

On which supposition, Abram's answer is less rude, but more astonishing. "Oh God, what wilt Thou give me? What good is money to me, who am childless?"

Again, as if Sir Stafford Northcote should answer, in the name of the British people, saying, "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me? What is the good to me of a surplus? What can I make of surplus? It is children that I want, not surplus!"

A truly notable parliamentary utterance on the Budget, if it might be! Not for a little while yet, thinks Sir Stafford; perhaps, think wiser and more sorrowful people than he, not until England has had to stone, according to the law of Deuteronomy xxi. 18, some of the children she has got: or at least to grapeshot them. I couldn't get anything like comfortable rooms in the Pea Hen at St. Alban's, the day before yesterday, because the Pea Hen was cherishing, for chickens under her wings, ever so many officers of the Royal Artillery; and some beautiful sixteen pounders,—exquisite fulfilments of all that science could devise, in those machines; which were unlimbered in the market-place, on their way to Sheffield—where I am going myself, as it happens. I wonder much, in the name of my mistress, whose finger is certainly in this pie, what business we have there, (both of us,) the black machines, and I. As Atropos would have it, too, I had only been making out, with good Mr. Douglas's help, in Woolwich Repository on Wednesday last, a

German Pea Hen's inscription on a sixteen-pounder of the fourteenth century :—

Ich bin furwahr, ein Grober Baur
Der frist mein agr, es wurd ihm Saur.

Verse 5th. "And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Tell now the stars, if thou be able to number them. So shall thy seed be."

Of course *you* would have answered God instantly, and told Him the exact number of the stars, and all their magnitudes. Simple Abram, conceiving that, even if he did count all he could see, there might yet be a few more out of sight, does not try.

Verse 6th. "And he believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness."

That, on the whole, is the primary verse of the entire Bible. If that is true, the rest is worth whatever Heaven is worth ; if that is untrue, the rest is worth nothing. You had better, therefore, if you can, learn it also in Greek and Latin.

"*Καὶ ἐπίστευσεν Ἀβραὰμ τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.*"

"Credidit Abram Deo, et reputatum est illo in justitiam."

If, then, that text be true, it will follow that you also, if you would have righteousness counted to you, must believe God. And you can't believe Him if He never says anything to you. Whereupon it will be desirable again to consider if He ever *has* said anything to you ; and if not, why not.

After this verse, I don't understand much of the

chapter myself—but I never expect to understand everything in the Bible, or even more than a little; and will make what I can of it.

Verses 7th, 8th. "And He said, I the Lord brought thee, to give thee this land, to inherit it.

"But he said, Lord, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?"

Now, I don't see how he could know it better than by being told so; nor how he knew it any better, after seeing a lamp moving between half-carcases. But we will at least learn, as well as we can, what happened; and think it over.

The star-lesson was of course given in the night; and, in the morning, Abram slays the five creatures, and watches their bodies all day.

'Such an absurd thing to do—to cut rams and cows in two to please God!'

Indeed it seems so; yet perhaps is better than cutting men in two to please ourselves; and we spend thirty millions a year in preparations for doing that. How many more swiftly divided carcases of horses and men, think you, my Christian friends, have the fowls fed on, *not* driven away,—finding them already carved for their feast, or blown into small and convenient morsels, by the military gentlemen of Europe, in sacrifice to—their own epaulettes, (poor gilded and eyeless idols!) during the past seventy and six years of this *one* out of the forty centuries since Abram?

"The birds divided he not." A turtle dove, or in Greek 'cooing dove;' and a pigeon, or in Greek

'dark dove;' or black dove, such as came to Dodona;—these were not to be cut through breast and backbone! Why? Why, indeed, any of this butchery and wringing of necks? Not wholly, perhaps, for Abram's amusement, or God's; like our coursing and pigeon-shooting;—but then, all the more earnestly one asks, why?

The Episcopal commentary tells you, (usefully this time) that the *beasts* were divided, because among all nations it was then the most solemn attestation of covenant to pass between halves of beasts. But the birds?

We are not sure, by the way, how far the cleaving might reach, without absolute division. Read Leviticus i., 15 to 17, and v., 6 to 10. 'You have nothing to do with those matters,' you think? I don't say you have; but in my schools you must know your Bible, and the meaning of it, or want of meaning, at least a little more definitely than you do now, before I let you throw the book away for ever. So have patience with it a little while; for indeed until you know something of this Bible, I can't go on to teach you any Koran, much less any Dante or Shakspeare. Have patience, therefore,—and you will need, probably, more than you think; for I am sadly afraid that you don't at present know so much as the difference between a burnt-offering and a sin-offering; nor between a sin-offering and a trespass-offering,—do you? (Lev. v., 15); so how can you possibly know anything about Abram's doves, or afterwards about Ion's,—not to speak of

the Madonna's? The whole story of the Ionic migration, and the carving of those Ionic capitals, which our architects don't know how to draw to this day, is complicated with the tradition of the saving of Ion's life by his recognition of a very small 'trespass'—a servant's momentary 'blasphemy.' Hearing it, he poured the wine he was about to drink out upon the ground. A dove, flying down from the temple cornice, dipped her beak in it, and died, for the wine had been poisoned by—his mother. But the meaning of all that myth is involved in this earlier and wilder mystery of the Mount of the Amorite.

On the slope of it, down to the vale of Eshcol, sat Abram, as the sun ripened its grapes through the glowing day; the shadows lengthening at last under the crags of Machpelah;—the golden light warm on Ephron's field, still Ephron's, wild with wood. "And as the sun went down, an horror of great darkness fell upon Abram."

Indigestion, most likely, thinks modern philosophy. Accelerated cerebation, with automatic conservation of psychic force, lucidly suggests Dr. Carpenter. Derangement of the sensori-motor processes, having certain relations of nextness, and behaviour uniformly depending on that nextness, condescendingly explains Professor Clifford.

Well, my scientific friends, if ever God does you the grace to give you experience of the sensations, either of horror, or darkness, even to the extent your books and you inflict them on my own tired soul, you will come out on the other side of that

shadow with newer views on many subjects than have occurred yet to you,—novelty-hunters though you be.

“Behold, thy seed shall be strangers, in a land not theirs.” Again, the importunate question returns, “When was this written?” But the really practical value of the passage for ourselves, is the definite statement, alike by the Greeks and Hebrews, of dream, as one of the states in which knowledge of the future may be distinctly given. The truth of this statement we must again determine for ourselves. Our dreams are partly in our power, by management of daily thought and food; partly, involuntary and accidental—very apt to run in contrary lines from those naturally to be expected of them; and partly, (at least, so say all the Hebrew prophets, and all great Greek, Latin, and English thinkers,) prophetic. Whether what Moses, Homer, David, Daniel, the Evangelists and St. Paul, Dante, Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Bacon, think on this matter, or what the last-whelped little curly-tailed puppy of the Newington University thinks, is most likely to be true—judge as you will.

“In the fourth generation they shall come hither again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”

What *was* the iniquity of the Amorites, think you, and what kind of people were they? Anything like ourselves? or wide-mouthed and goggle-eyed,—terrifically stalking above the vineyard stakes of Eshcol? If like us, in any wise, is it possible that we also may be committing iniquity, capable of less

and more fulness, through such a space as four hundred years? Questions worth pausing at; and we will at least try to be a little clear-headed as to Amorite personality.

We habitually speak of the Holy Land as the Land of 'Canaan.' The 'promised' land was indeed that of Canaan, with others. But Israel never got it. They got only the Mount of the Amorites; for the promise was only to be perfected on condition of their perfect obedience. Therefore, I asked you to learn Genesis x. 15, and Genesis x. 16, separately. For *all* the Canaanites were left, to prove Israel, (Judges iii. 3,) and a good many of the Amorites and Jebusites too, (Judges iii. 5-7,) but in the main Israel subdued the last two races, and held the hill country from Lebanon to Hebron, and the capital, Jerusalem, for their own. And if instead of 'Amorites,' you will read generally 'Highlanders,' (which the word means,) and think of them, for a beginning of notion, simply as Campbells and Macgregors of the East, getting themselves into relations with the pious Israelites closely resembling those of the Highland race and mind of Scotland with its evangelical and economical Lowlanders, you will read these parts of your Bible in at least an incipiently intelligent manner. And above all, you will, or may, understand that the Amorites had a great deal of good in them: that they and the Jebusites were on the whole a generous and courteous people,—so that, when Abram dwells with the Amorite princes, Mamre and Eshcol, they are

faithful allies to him; and when he buys his grave from Ephron the Hittite, and David the threshing floor from Araunah the Jebusite, both of the mountaineers behave just as the proudest and truest Highland chief would. "What is that between me and thee?" "All these things did Araunah, as a King, give unto the King—and Araunah said unto the King, The Lord thy God accept thee." Not *our* God, you see;—but giving sadly, as the Sidonian widow begging,—with claim of no part in Israel.

'Mere oriental formulæ,' says the Cockney modern expositor—'offers made in fore-knowledge that they would not be accepted.'

No, curly-tailed bow-wow; it is only you and other such automatic poodles who are 'formulæ.' Automatic, by the way, you are not; we all know how to wind you up to run with a whirr, like toy-mice.

Well, now read consecutively, but quietly, Numbers xiii. 22-29, xxi. 13-26, Deuteronomy iii. 8-13, and Joshua x. 6-14, and you will get a notion or two, which with those already obtained you may best arrange as follows.

Put the Philistines, and giants, or bulls, of Bashan, out of the way at present; they are merely elements of physical malignant force, sent against Samson, Saul, and David, as a half-human shape of lion or bear,—carrying off the ark of God in their mouths, and not knowing in the least what to do with it. You already know Tyre as the trading power, Ethiopia as the ignorant—Egypt as the wise—

slave; then the Amorites, among the children of Ham, correspond to the great mountain and pastoral powers of the Shemites; and are far the noblest and purest of the race: abiding in their own fastnesses, desiring no conquest, but as Sihon, admitting no invader;—holding their crags so that nothing can be taken out of the hand of the Amorite but with the sword and bow, (Gen. xlviii. 22;) yet living chiefly by pasture and agriculture; worshipping, in their early dynasties, the one eternal God; and, in the person of their great high priest, Melchizedec, but a few years before this vision, blessing the father of the faithful, and feeding him with the everlasting sacraments of earth,—bread and wine,—in the level valley of the Kings, under Salem, the city of peace.

Truly, ‘the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full.’

I have given you enough to think of, for this time; but you can’t work it out rightly without a clearly intelligible map of Palestine, and raised models of the districts of Hebron and Jerusalem, which I will provide as soon as possible, according to St. George’s notions of what such things should be, for the Sheffield museum: to the end that at least, in that district of the Yorkshire Amorites, singularly like the Holy Land in its level summits and cleft defiles, it may be understood what England also had once to bring forth of blessing in her own vales of peace; and how her gathering iniquity may bring upon her,—(and at this instant, as I write,

early on Good Friday, the malignant hail of spring time, slaying blossom and leaf, smites rattling on the ground that should be soft with flowers,) such day of ruin as the great hail darkened in the going down to Beth-horon, and the sun, that had bronzed their corn and flushed their grape, prolonged on Ajalon, implacable.

"And it came to pass, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp which passed between those pieces."

What a lovely vision, half of it, at any rate, to the eye of modern progress! Foretelling, doubtless, smoking furnaces, and general civilization, in this Amorite land of barbarous vines and fig-trees! Yes—my progressive friends. That was precisely what the vision *did* foretell,—in the first half of it; and not very many summer mornings afterwards, Abram, going out for his walk in the dew round his farm,* saw its fulfilment in quite literal terms, on the horizon. (Gen. xix 28.) The smoke of the

* Abram's mountain home seems to have been much like Horace's, as far as I can make out: but see accounts of modern travellers. Our translation "in the plain of Mamre" (Genesis xiii. 28; xiv. 13) is clearly absurd; the gist of the separation between Lot and Abram being Lot's choice of the plain, as 'the Paradise of God,' and Abram's taking the rock ground. The Vulgate says 'in the ravine' of Mamre; the Septuagint, 'by the oak.' I doubt not the Hebrew is meant to carry both senses, as of a rocky Vallombrosa: the Amorites at that time knew how to keep their rain, and guide their springs. Compare the petition of Caleb's daughter when she is married, after being brought up on this very farm, Joshua xv. 17, 18; comparing also xiv. 14, 15, and of the hill country generally, xvi. 15, and Deut. xi. 10-12, 17.

country went up as the smoke of a furnace. But what do you make of the other part of the night-vision? Striking of oil? and sale of numerous patent lamps? But Abram never did strike any oil—except olive, which could only be had on the usual terms of laborious beating and grinding, and in moderate quantities. What do you make of the second half of the vision?

Only a minute part of its infinite prophecy was fulfilled in those flames of the Paradise of Lot. For the two fires were the sign of the presence of the Person who accepted the covenant, in passing between the pieces of the victim. And they shone, therefore, for the signature of His Name; that name which we pray may be hallowed; and for what that name entirely means;—‘the Lord, merciful and gracious,—and that will by no means clear the guilty.’

For as on the one side He is like a refiner’s fire, so that none may abide the day of His coming,—so on the other He is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. And all the pain of grief and punishment, temporal or eternal, following on the broken covenant; and all the sweet guidance of the lamp to the feet and the light to the path, granted to those who keep it, are meant by the passing of the darkened and undarkened flames.

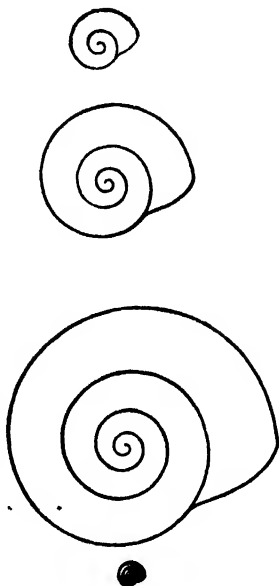
Finish now the learning this whole chapter accurately, and when you come to the eighteenth verse, note how much larger the *promised* land was, than we usually imagine it; and what different manner

of possession the Israelites got of its borders, by the waters of Babylon, and rivers of Egypt, (compare Jeremiah xxxix. 9, with xliii. 6 and 7) than they might have had, if they had pleased.

And now, when you have got well into your heads that the Holy Land is, broadly, the mountain or highland of the Amorites, (compare Deut. i. 7, 20, 44, Numbers xiii. 29,) look to the verse which you have probably quoted often, "Behold upon the mountains the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings,"—without ever asking *what* mountains, or what tidings. The mountains are these Amorite crags, and the tidings are of the last destruction of the Hamite power, in the other three great brethren. Cush, Mizraim, and Phut. Read your Nahum through slowly; and learn the eighth and ninth verses of the third chapter, to be always remembered as the completion of the fifteenth, which you know the first half of so well already—though I suppose you rarely go on to its practical close, "Oh Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows; for the wicked shall no more pass through thee"—this 'passing,' observe, being the ruinous war of the bitter and hasty nation, (compare Habakkuk i 6-8 with the last verse of Nahum,) which spiritually is the type of all ruinous and violent passion, such as now passes continually to and fro in this English land of ours.

I am not much in a humour to examine further to-day the passing of its slower molluscous Assyrians; but may at least affirm what I believe at last

to be the sure conclusion of my young hunter of Arundel;—that the spiral of the shell uniformly increases its coil from birth to maturity. Here are examples of the minute species sent me by Mr. Sillar, in three stages of growth; the little black spots giving them in their natural size (with much economic skill of Mr. Burgess' touch). The three magnified spirals you may as well copy, and find out how many these little creatures may have. I had taken them for the young of the common snail when I wrote last; but we will have all our facts clear some day, both concerning bees, and slugs, and the larger creatures, industrious or lazy, whom they are meant to teach.



But I want to finish my letter for this time with a word or two more of my Scottish Amorite aunt, after she was brought down into Lowland life by her practical tanner. She, a pure dark-eyed dove-priestess, if ever there was one, of Highland blood? Strangely, the kitchen servant-of-all-work in the house at Rose Terrace was a very old "Mause" who might well have been the

prototype of the Mause of 'Old Mortality,'* but had even a more solemn, fearless, and patient faith, fastened in her by extreme suffering; for she had been nearly starved to death when she was a girl, and had literally picked the bones out of cast-out dust-heaps to gnaw; and ever afterwards, to see the waste of an atom of food was as shocking to her as blasphemy. "Oh, Miss Margaret!" she said once to my mother, who had shaken some crumbs off a dirty plate out of the window, "I had rather you had knocked me down." She would make her dinner upon anything in the house that the other servants couldn't eat;—often upon potato skins, giving her own dinner away to any poor person she saw; and would always stand during the whole church service, (though at least seventy years old when I knew her, and very

* Vulgar modern Puritanism has shown its degeneracy in nothing more than in its incapability of understanding Scott's exquisitely finished portraits of the Covenanter. In 'Old Mortality,' alone, there are four which cannot be surpassed; the typical one, Bessie Maclure, faultlessly sublime and pure; the second, Ephraim Macbriar, giving the too common phase of the character, which is touched with ascetic insanity; the third, Mause, coloured and made sometimes ludicrous by Scottish conceit, but utterly strong and pure at heart; the last, Balfour, a study of supreme interest, showing the effect of the Puritan faith, sincerely held, on a naturally and incurably cruel and base spirit. His last battle-cry—"Down with the Amorites," the chief Amorite being Lord Evandale, is intensely illustrative of all I have asked you to learn to-day. Add to these four studies, from this single novel, those in the 'Heart of Midlothian,' and Nicol Jarvie and Andrew Fairservice from 'Rob Roy,' and you have a series of theological analyses far beyond those of any other philosophical work that I know, of any period.

feeble,) if she could persuade any wild Amorite out of the streets to take her seat. Her wrinkled and worn face, moveless in resolution, and patience; incapable of smile, and knit sometimes perhaps too severely against Jessie and me, if we wanted more creamy milk to our porridge, or jumped off our favourite box on Sunday,—('Never mind, John,' said Jessie to me once, seeing me in an unchristian state of provocation on this subject, 'when we're married, we'll jump off boxes all day long, if we like!') may have been partly instrumental in giving me that slight bias against the Evangelical religion which I confess to be sometimes traceable in my later works: but I never can be thankful enough for having seen, in her, the Scottish Puritan spirit in its perfect faith and force; and been enabled therefore afterwards to trace its agency in the reforming policy of Scotland with the reverence and honour it deserves.

My aunt was of a far gentler temper, but still, to me remained at a wistful distance. She had been much saddened by the loss of three of her children, before her husband's death. Little Peter, especially, had been the corner-stone of her love's building; and it was thrown down swiftly:—white swelling came in the knee; he suffered much; and grew weaker gradually, dutiful always, and loving, and wholly patient. She wanted him one day to take half a glass of port wine,—and took him on her knee, and put it to his lips. 'Not now, mamma;—in a minute,' said he; and put his head on her

shoulder, and gave one long, low sigh, and died. Then there was Catherine; and—I forget the other little daughter's name, I did not see them; my mother told me of them;—eagerly always about Catherine, who had been her own favourite. My aunt had been talking earnestly one day with her husband about these two children; planning this and that for their schooling and what not: at night, for a little while she could not sleep; and as she lay thinking, she saw the door of the room open; and two spades come into it, and stand at the foot of her bed. Both the children were dead within brief time afterwards. I was about to write 'within a fortnight'—but I cannot be sure of remembering my mother's words accurately.

But when I was in Perth, there were still—Mary, her eldest daughter, who looked after us children when Mause was too busy,—James and John, William and Andrew; (I can't think whom the unapostolic William was named after; he became afterwards a good physician in London, and Tunbridge Wells; his death, last year, is counted among the others that I have spoken of as recently leaving me very lonely). But the boys were then all at school or college,—the scholars, William and Andrew, only came home to tease Jessie and me, and eat the biggest jargonel pears; the collegians were wholly abstract; and the two girls and I played in our quiet ways on the North-inch, and by the 'Lead,' a stream, 'led' from the Tay past Rose Terrace, into the town for molinary purposes;

a perpetual treasure of flowing diamond to us children. Mary, by the way, was nearly fourteen—fair, blue-eyed, and moderately pretty; and as pious as Jessie, without being quite so zealous. And I scarcely know if those far years of summer sunshine were dreams, or if this horror of darkness is one, to-day, at St. Albans, where, driven out of the abbey, unable to bear the sight of its restorations, and out of the churchyard, where I would fain have stayed to draw, by the black plague-wind, I take refuge from all in an old apple-woman's shop, because she reminds me of my Croydon Amorite aunt,—and her little window of the one in the parlour beside the shop in Market Street. She sells comic songs as well as apples. I invest a penny in 'The Union Jack,' and find, in the course of conversation, that the result of our unlimited national prosperity upon *her*, is, that where she used to take twopence from one customer, she now takes five farthings from five,—that her rates are twelve shillings instead of six,—that she is very tired of it all, and hopes God will soon take her to heaven.

Many find
Almighty give us success over these fellows
and enable us to get a Peace

LETTER LXVI

MIRACLE

BRANTWOOD, 14th May, 1876.

THOSE of my readers who have followed me as far as I have hitherto gone in our careful reading of the Pentateuch, must, I think, have felt with me, in natural consequence of this careful reading, more than hitherto, the life and reality of the record ; but, in the degree of this new life, new wonderfulness, and difficult credibility ! For it is always easy to imagine that we believe what we do not understand ; and often graceful and convenient to consent in the belief of others, as to what we do not care about. But when we begin to know clearly what is told, the question if it be fable or fact becomes inevitable in our minds ; and if the fact, once admitted, would bear upon our conduct, its admission can no longer be made a matter of mere social courtesy.

Accordingly, I find one of my more earnest readers already asking me, privately, if I really believed that the hail on Good Friday last had been sent as a punishment for national sin ?—and I should think, and even hope, that other of my readers

would like to ask me, respecting the same passage, whether I believed that the sun ever stood still?

To whom I could only answer, what I answered some time since in my paper on Miracle for the Metaphysical Society, (*Contemporary Review*)* that the true miracle, to my mind, would not be in the sun's standing still, but IS in its going on! We are all of us being swept down to death in a sea of miracle; we are drowned in wonder, as gnats in a Rhine whirlpool: unless we are worse,—drowned in pleasure, or sloth, or insolence.

Nevertheless, I do not feel myself in the least called upon to believe that the sun stood still, or the earth either, during that pursuit at Ajalon. Nay, it would not anywise amaze me to find that there never had been any such pursuit—never any Joshua, never any Moses; and that the Jews, "taken generally," as an amiable clerical friend told me from his pulpit a Sunday or two ago, "were a Christian people."

But it does amaze me—almost to helplessness of hand and thought—to find the men and women of these days careless of such issue; and content, so that they can feed and breathe their fill, to eat like cattle, and breathe like plants, questionless of the Spirit that makes the grass to grow for them on the mountains, or the breeze they breathe on them, its messengers, or the fire that dresses their food, its minister. Desolate souls, for whom the

* Reprinted in 'On the Old Road,' vol. ii., p. 353

sun—beneath, not above, the horizon—stands still for ever.

‘Amazed,’ I say, ‘almost to helplessness of hand and thought’—quite literally both. I was reading yesterday, by Fors’ order, Mr. Edward B. Tylor’s idea of the Greek faith in Apollo: “If the sun travels along its course like a glittering chariot, forthwith the wheels, and the driver, and the horses are there;” * and Mr. Frederick Harrison’s gushing article on Humanity, in the *Contemporary Review*; and a letter about our Cotton Industry (hereafter to be quoted,†) and this presently following bit of Sir Philip Sidney’s 68th Psalm;—and my hands are cold this morning, after the horror, and wonder, and puzzlement of my total Sun-less-day, and my head is now standing still, or at least turning round, giddy, instead of doing its work by Shrewsbury clock; and I don’t know where to begin with the quantity I want to say,—all the less that I’ve said a great deal of it before, if I only knew where to tell you to find it. All up and down my later books, from ‘Unto This Last’ to ‘Eagle’s Nest,’ and again and again throughout ‘Fors,’ you will find references to the practical connection between physical and spiritual light—of which now I would fain state, in

* ‘Early History of Mankind,’ (a book of rare value and research, however,) p. 379.

† In the meantime, if any of my readers will look at the leading articles of the *Monetary Gazette*, whose editor I thank with all my heart and soul, for the first honest commercial statements I ever saw in English journals, they will get sufficient light on such matters.

the most unmistakable terms, this sum : that you cannot love the real sun, that is to say physical light and colour, rightly, unless you love the spiritual sun, that is to say justice and truth, rightly. That for unjust and untrue persons, there is no real joy in physical light, so that they don't even know what the word means. That the entire system of modern life is so corrupted with the ghastliest forms of injustice and untruth, carried to the point of not recognizing themselves as either—for as long as Bill Sykes knows that he is a robber, and Jeremy Diddler that he is a rascal, there is still some of Heaven's light left for both—but when everybody steals, cheats, and goes to Church, complacently, and the light of their whole body is darkness, how great is that darkness! And that the physical result of that mental vileness is a total carelessness of the beauty of sky, or the cleanness of streams, or the life of animals and flowers : and I believe that the powers of Nature are depressed or perverted, together with the Spirit of Man ; and therefore that conditions of storm and of physical darkness, such as never were before in Christian times, are developing themselves, in connection also with forms of loathsome insanity, multiplying through the whole genesis of modern brains.

As I correct this sheet for press, I chance, by Fors' order, in a prayer of St. John Damascene's to the Virgin, on this, to me, very curious and interesting clause ; " Redeem me from the dark metamorphosis of the angels, rescuing me from the bitter

law-giving of the farmers of the air, and the rulers of the darkness.

“τῆς σκοτεινῆς με τῶν δαιμόνων λυτρου μέτημορφῆς, (I am not answerable either for Damascene Greek, or for my MS. of it, in 1396,) τοῦ πικροτάτου λογοθεσίου τῶν τελωνῶν τοῦ ἀέρος καὶ τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ σκότους ἐξαίρουσα.”

And now—of this entangling in the shrine of half-born and half-sighted things, see this piece of Sir Philip Sidney’s psalm. I want it also for the bit of conchology at the end. The italics are mine.

“And call ye this to utter what is just,
You that of justice hold the sov’raign throne?
And call yee this to yield, O sonnes of dust,
To wronged brethren ev’ry one his own?
O no . it is your long malicious will
Now to the world to make by practice known.
With whose oppression you the ballance fill,
Just to your selves, indiff’rent else to none

But what could they, who ev’n in birth declin’d,
From truth and right to lies and injuries
To shew the *venom of their cancred mynd*
The adder’s image scarcely can suffice.
Nay, scarce the aspick may with them contend,
On whom the charmer all in vaine applies
His skillful’st spells · aye, missing of his end,
While shee *self-deaf, and unaffected*, lies.

Lord, crack their teeth, Lord, crush Thou these lions’
jaws,
Soe lett them sinck as water in the sand :
When deadly bow their aiming fury drawes,
Shiver the shaft, ere past the shooter’s hand.

*So make them melt as the dishoused snail,
Or as the embrio whose vitall band
Breakes ere it holdes, and formlesse eyes doe faile
To see the sun, though brought to lightfull land."*

'Dishoused' snail! That's a bit, observe, of Sir Philip's own natural history, perfecting the image in the psalm, "as a snail which melteth." The 'housed' snail can shelter himself from evil weather, but the poor houseless slug, a mere slimy mass of helpless blackness,—shower-begotten, as it seems,—what is to become of *it* when the sun is up!

Not that even houseless snails melt,—nor that there's anything about snails at all in David's psalm, I believe, both Vulgate and Septuagint saying 'wax' instead, as in Psalms lxviii. 2, xcvi. 5, etc.; but I suppose there's some reptilian sense in the Hebrew, justifying our translation here—all the more interesting to me because of a puzzle I got into in Isaiah, the other day; respecting which, lest you should fancy I'm too ready to give up Joshua and the sun without taking trouble about them, please observe this very certain condition of your Scriptural studies; that if you read the Bible with predetermination to pick out every text you approve of—that is to say, generally, any that confirm you in the conceit of your own religious sect,—that console you for the consequences of your own faults,—or assure you of a pleasant future though you attend to none of your present duties—on these terms you will find the Bible entirely intelligible, and wholly delightful: but if you read

it with a real purpose of trying to understand it, and obey; and so read it all through, steadily, you will find it, out and out, the crabbedest and most difficult book you ever tried; horribly ill written in many parts, according to all human canons; totally unintelligible in others; and with the gold of it only to be got at by a process of crushing, in which nothing but the iron teeth of the fiercest and honestest resolution will prevail against its adamant.

For instance, take the 16th of Isaiah. Who is to send the Lamb? why is the Lamb to be sent? what does the Lamb mean? There is nothing in the Greek Bible about a Lamb at all, nor is anybody told to send anything. But God says *He* will send something, apostolically, as reptiles!

Then, are the daughters of Moab the outcasts, as in the second verse, or other people, as in the fourth? How is Moab's throne to be established in righteousness, in the tabernacle of David, in the fifth? What are his lies not to be, in the sixth? And why is he to howl for himself, in the seventh? Ask any of the young jackanapes you put up to chatter out of your pulpits, to tell you even so much as this, of the first half-dozen verses! But above all, ask them who the persons are who are to be sent apostolically as reptiles?

* * * * *

My writing-lesson, this month, is a facsimile of the last words written by Nelson. in his cabin, with

the allied fleets in sight, off Trafalgar. It is entirely fine in general structure and character.

Mr. Ward has now three, and will I hope soon have the fourth, of our series of lesson photographs, namely,—

1. Madonna by Filippo Lippi.
2. The Etruscan Leucothea.
3. Madonna by Titian.
4. Infanta Margaret, by Velasquez.

On these I shall lecture, as I have time, here and in the 'Laws of Fésole;' but, in preparation for all farther study, when you have got the four, put them beside each other, putting the Leucothea first, the Lippi second, and the others as numbered.

Then, the first, the Leucothea, is entirely noble religious art, of the fifth or sixth century B.C., full of various meaning and mystery, of knowledges that are lost, feelings that have ceased, myths and symbols of the laws of life, only to be traced by those who know much both of life and death.

Technically, it is still in Egyptian bondage, but in course of swiftly progressive redemption.

The second is nobly religious work of the fifteenth century of Christ,—an example of the most perfect unison of religious myth with faithful realism of human nature yet produced in this world. The Etruscan traditions are preserved in it even to the tassels of the throne cushion: the pattern of these, and of the folds at the edge of the angel's drapery, may be seen in the Etruscan tomb now central in

the first compartment of the Egyptian gallery of the British Museum; and the double cushion of that tomb is used, with absolute obedience to his tradition, by Jacopo della Quercia, in the tomb of Ilaria di Caretto.

The third represents the last phase of the noble religious art of the world, in which realization has become consummate; but all supernatural aspect is refused, and mythic teaching is given only in obedience to former tradition, but with no anxiety for its acceptance. Here is, for certain, a sweet Venetian peasant, with her child, and fruit from the market-boats of Mestre. The *Ecce Agnus*, topsy-turvy on the finely perspectived scroll, may be deciphered by whoso list.

But the work itself is still sternly conscientious, severe, reverent, and faultless.

The fourth is an example of the highest reach of technical perfection yet reached in art; all effort and labour seeming to cease in the radiant peace and simplicity of consummated human power. But all belief in supernatural things, all hope of a future state, all effort to teach, and all desire to be taught, have passed away from the artist's mind. The Child and her Dog are to him equally real, equally royal, equally mortal. And the History of Art since it reached this phase—cannot be given in the present number of '*Fors Clavigera*.'

* * * * *

I have promised an answer to the following pretty little initial-signed petition; and will try to answer

fully, though I must go over ground crossed often enough before. But it is often well to repeat things in other times and words :—

"16th March, 1876.

"SIR,—Being very much interested in St. George's Society, we venture to write and ask you if you will be so kind as to send us the rules, as, even if we could not join it, we should so like to try and keep them. We hope you will excuse our troubling you, but we do not know how else to obtain the rules

"We remain, yours truly."

My dear children, the rules of St. George's Company are none other than those which, at your baptism, your godfathers and godmothers promised to see that you should obey—namely, the rules of conduct given to all His disciples by Christ, so far as, according to your ages, you can understand or practise them. But the Christian religion being now mostly obsolete (and worse, falsely professed) throughout Europe, your godfathers, and godmothers, too probably, had no very clear notion of the Devil or his works, when they promised you should renounce them; and St. George hereby sends you a splinter of his lance, in token that you will find extreme difficulty in putting any of Christ's wishes into practice, under the present basilisk power of society.

Nevertheless, St. George's first order to you, supposing you were put under his charge, would be that you should always, in whatever you do, endeavour to please Christ; (and *He* is quite easily

pleased if you try;) but in attempting this, you will instantly find yourself likely to displease many of your friends or relations: and St. George's second order to you is that in whatever you do, you consider what is kind and dutiful to them also; and that you hold it for a sure rule, that no manner of disobedience to your parents, or of disrespect and presumption towards your friends, can be pleasing to God. You must therefore be doubly submissive: first in your own will and purpose, to the law of Christ; then in the carrying out of your purpose, to the pleasure and orders of the persons whom He has given you for superiors. And you are not to submit to them sullenly, but joyfully and heartily; keeping nevertheless your own purpose clear, so soon as it becomes proper for you to carry it out.

Under these conditions, here are a few of St. George's orders for you to begin with:—

1st. Keep absolute calm of temper, under all chances; receiving everything that is provoking or disagreeable to you as coming directly from Christ's hand: and the more it is like to provoke you, thank Him for it the more; as a young soldier would his general for trusting him with a hard place to hold on the rampart. And remember, it does not in the least matter what happens to you, —whether a clumsy schoolfellow tears your dress, or a shrewd one laughs at you, or the governess doesn't understand you. The *one* thing needful is that none of these things should vex you. For

your mind, at this time of your youth, is crystallizing like sugar-candy ; and the least jar to it flaws the crystal, and that permanently.

2nd. Say to yourselves every morning, just after your prayers : "Whoso forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple." That is exactly and completely true ; meaning, that you are to give all you have to Christ, to take care of for you. Then if He doesn't take care of it, of course you know it wasn't worth anything. And if He takes anything from you, you know you are better without it. You will not indeed, at your age, have to give up houses, or lands, or boats, or nets ; but you may perhaps break your favourite teacup, or lose your favourite thimble, and might be vexed about it, but for this second St. George's precept.

3rd. What, after this surrender, you find entrusted to you, take extreme care of, and make as useful as possible. The greater part of all they have is usually given to grown-up people by Christ, merely that they may give it away again ; but school-girls, for the most part, are likely to have little more than what is needed for themselves : of which, whether books, dresses, or pretty room-furniture, you are to take extreme care, looking on yourself, indeed, practically, as a little housemaid set to keep Christ's books and room in order ; and not as yourself the mistress of anything.

4th. Dress as plainly as your parents will allow you : but in bright colours, (if they become you,) and

in the best materials,—that is to say, in those which will wear longest. When you are really in want of a new dress, buy it (or make it) in the fashion : but never quit an old one merely because it has become unfashionable. And if the fashion be costly, you must not follow it. You may wear broad stripes or narrow, bright colours or dark, short petticoats or long, (in moderation,) as the public wish you ; but you must not buy yards of useless stuff to make a knot or a flounce of ; nor drag them behind you over the ground. And your walking dress must never touch the ground at all. I have lost much of the faith I once had in the common sense, and even in the personal delicacy of the present race of average English women, by seeing how they will allow their dresses to sweep the streets, if it is the fashion to be scavengers.

5th. If you can afford it, get your dresses made by a good dressmaker, with utmost attainable precision and perfection : but let this good dressmaker be a poor person, living in the country ; not a rich person living in a large house in London. ‘There are no good dressmakers in the country’? No : but there soon will be if you obey St. George’s orders, which are very strict indeed, about never buying dresses in London. ‘You bought one there, the other day, for your own pet!’ Yes ; but that was because she was a wild Amorite, who had wild Amorites to please ; not a Companion of St. George.

6th. Devote a part of every day to thorough

needlework, in making as pretty dresses as you can for poor people, who have not time nor taste to make them nicely for themselves. You are to show them in your own wearing, what is modestly right, and graceful; and to help them to choose what will be prettiest and most becoming in their own station. If they see that you never try to dress above yours, they will not try to dress above theirs. Read the little scene between Miss Somers and Simple Susan, in the draper's shop, in Miss Edgeworth's 'Parent's Assistant'; and by the way, if you have not that book, let it be the next birthday present you ask papa or uncle for.

7th. Never seek for amusement, but be always ready to be amused. The least thing has play in it,—the slightest word, wit,—when your hands are busy and your heart is free. But if you make the aim of your life amusement, the day will come when all the agonies of a pantomime will not bring you an honest laugh. Play actively and gaily; and cherish, without straining, the natural powers of jest in others and yourselves;—remembering all the while that your hand is every instant on the helm of the ship of your life, and that the Master, on the far shore of Araby the blest, looks for its sail on the horizon—to its hour.

I told you, at first, that you would have great difficulty in getting leave from English Society to obey Christ. Fors has just sent me, in support of this statement, a paper called *The Christian*, for Thursday, May 11, 1876—an article on young

ladies, headed "What can they do?" from which I take the following passage :—

"There have been times of special prayer for young men and women. Could there not be also for the very large class of young ladies who do not go out into society? They have no home duties to detain them, as many in a humbler condition; they have hours and hours of leisure, and know not how to spend them—partly from need of being directed, but more so from the prejudices and hindrances in their way. Their hearts are burning to do something for Christ, but they are not allowed, partly because it is considered 'improper,' and for a variety of reasons."

Now, that it is 'considered improper' by the world that you should do anything for Christ, is entirely true, and always true: and therefore it was that your godfathers and godmothers, in your name, renounced the "vain pomp and glory of the *world*," with all covetous desires of the same—see Baptismal Service. But I much doubt if, either privately, or from the pulpit of your doubtless charming church, you have ever been taught what the "vain pomp and glory of the world" *was*.

Well,—do you want to be better dressed than your schoolfellows? Some of them are probably poor, and cannot afford to dress like you; or, on the other hand, you may be poor yourselves, and may be mortified at their being dressed better than you. Put an end to all that at once, by resolving to go down into the deep of your girl's heart, where you will find, inlaid by Christ's own hand, a better

thing than vanity—pity. And be sure of this, that, although in a truly Christian land every young girl would be dressed beautifully and delightfully,—in this entirely heathen and Baal-worshipping land of ours, not one girl in ten has either decent or healthy clothing: and that you have no business, till this be amended, to wear anything fine yourself; but *are bound to use your full strength and resources* to dress as many of your poor neighbours as you can. What of fine dress your people insist upon your wearing, take—and wear proudly and prettily, for their sakes; but, so far as in you lies, be sure that every day you are labouring to clothe some poorer creatures. And if you cannot clothe, at least help, with your hands. You can make your own bed; wash your own plate; brighten your own furniture,—if nothing else.

‘But that’s servant’s work’? Of course it is. What business have you to hope to be better than a servant of servants? ‘God made you a lady’? Yes, He has put you, that is to say, in a position in which you may learn to speak your own language beautifully; to be accurately acquainted with the elements of other languages; to behave with grace, tact, and sympathy, to all around you; to know the history of your country, the commands of its religion, and the duties of its race. If you obey His will in learning these things, you will obtain the power of becoming a true ‘lady’; and you will become one, if while you learn these things you set yourself, with all the strength of your youth and

womanhood, to serve His servants, until the day come when He calls you to say, "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

You may thus become a Christ's lady, or you may, if you will, become a Belial's lady, taking Belial's gift of miserable idleness; living on the labour and shame of others; and deceiving them and yourself by lies about Providence, until you perish with the rest of such, shrieking the bitter cry, "When saw we *Thee*?"

You may become a Christ's lady if you *will*, I say; but you *must* will vigorously—there is no possible compromise. Most people think, if they keep all the best rooms in their hearts swept and garnished for Christ, with plenty of flowers and good books in them, that they may keep a little chamber in their heart's wall for Belial, on his occasional visits, or a three-legged stool for him in the heart's counting-house, or a corner for him in the heart's scullery, where he may lick the dishes. It won't do, my dears! You must cleanse the house of him, as you would of the plague, to the last spot. You must be resolved that as all you have, shall be God's, so all you *are* shall be God's; and you are to make it so, simply and quietly, by thinking always of yourself merely as sent to do His work; and considering at every leisure time, what you are to do next. Don't fret nor tease yourself about it, far less other people. Don't wear white crosses, nor black dresses, nor caps with

lappets. Nobody has any right to go about in an offensively celestial uniform, as if it were more *their* business, or privilege, than it is everybody's, to be God's servants. But, know and feel assuredly that every day of your lives you have done all you can for the good of others. Done, I repeat—not said. Help your companions, but don't talk religious sentiment to them; and serve the poor, but, for your lives, you little monkeys, don't preach to them. They are probably, without in the least knowing it, fifty times better Christians than you; and if anybody is to preach, let *them*. Make friends of them when they are nice, as you do of nice rich people; feel with them, work with them, and if you are not at last sure it is a pleasure to you both to see each other, keep out of their way. For material charity, let older and wiser people see to it; and be content, like Athenian maids in the procession of their home-goddess, with the honour of carrying the basket.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

LETTER LXVII

COMPANIONSHIP

AS I am now often asked, in private letters, the constitution of St. George's Company, and cannot, hitherto, refer, in answer, to any clear summary of it, I will try to write such a summary in this number of *Fors*, that it may henceforward be sent to inquirers as alone sufficiently explanatory.

The St. George's Company is a society established to carry out certain charitable objects, towards which it invites, and thankfully will receive, help from any persons caring to give it, either in money, labour, or any kind of gift. But the Company itself consists of persons who agree in certain general principles of action, and objects of pursuit, and who can, therefore, act together in effective and constant unison.

These objects of pursuit are, in brief terms, the health, wealth, and long life of the British nation: the Company having thus devoted itself, in the conviction that the British nation is at present unhealthy, poor, and likely to perish, as a power, from the face of the earth. They accordingly propose to themselves the general medicining, enriching, and preserving in political strength, of

the population of these islands; they themselves numbering at present, in their ranks, about thirty persons,—none of them rich, several of them sick, and the leader of them, at all events, not likely to live long.

Whether the nation be healthy, or in unwholesome degradation of body and mind; wealthy, or in continual and shameful distress; strong, or in rapid decline of political power and authority,—the reader will find debated throughout the various contents of the preceding volumes of Fors. But there is one public fact, which cannot be debated—that the nation is in debt. And the St. George's Company do practically make it their *first*, though not their principal, object, to bring *that* state of things to an end; and to establish, instead of a National Debt, a National Store. (See the last line of the fifth page of the first letter of the series, published 1st January, 1871, and the eleventh, and twenty-seventh, letters throughout.)

That very few readers of *this* page have any notion, at this moment, what a National Debt is, or can conceive what a National Store should be, is one of many evil consequences of the lies which, under the title of "Political Economy," have been taught by the ill-educated, and mostly dishonest, commercial men who at present govern the press of the country.

I have again and again stated the truth in both these matters, but must try once more to do it, emphatically and intelligibly.

A 'civilized nation' in modern Europe consists, in broad terms, of (A) a mass of half-taught, discontented, and mostly penniless populace, calling itself the people; of (B) a thing which it calls a government—meaning an apparatus for collecting and spending money; and (C) a small number of capitalists, many of them rogues, and most of them stupid persons, who have no idea of any object of human existence other than money-making, gambling, or champagne-bibbing. A certain quantity of literary men, saying anything they can get paid to say,—of clergymen, saying anything they have been taught to say,—of natural philosophers, saying anything that comes into their heads,—and of nobility, saying nothing at all, combine in disguising the action, and perfecting the disorganization, of the mass; but with respect to practical business, the civilized nation consists broadly of mob, money-collecting machine, and capitalist.

Now when the civilized mob wants to spend money for any profitless or mischievous purposes, — fireworks, illuminations, battles, driving about from place to place, or what not, — being itself penniless, it sets its money-collecting machine to borrow the sum needful for these amusements from the civilized capitalist.

The civilized capitalist lends the money, on condition that, through the money-collecting machine, he may tax the civilized mob thenceforward for ever. The civilized mob spends the money forthwith, in gunpowder, infernal machines, masquerade dresses,

new boulevards, or anything else it has set its idiotic mind on for the moment; and appoints its money-collecting machine to collect a daily tax from its children, and children's children, to be paid to the capitalists from whom it had received the accommodation, thenceforward for ever.

* That is the nature of a National Debt.

In order to understand that of a National Store, my readers must first consider what any store whatever, serviceable to human beings, consists of. A store properly means a collection of useful things. Literally, it signifies only a quantity,—or much of *anything*. But the heap of broken bottles which, I hear, is accumulating under the principal cliff of Snowdon, through the contributions of tourists from the summit, is not properly to be called a store; though a binfull of old wine is. Neither is a heap of cannon-balls a store;* though a heap of potatoes is. Neither is a cellar full of gunpowder a store; though a cellar full of coals is. A store is, for squirrels, of nuts; for bees, of honey; for men, of food, clothes, fuel, or pretty things, such as toys or jewels,—and, for educated persons, of books and pictures.

And the possession of such a store by the nation would signify, that there were no taxes to pay; that everybody had clothes enough, and some stuff laid by for next year; that everybody had food enough,

* They may serve for the *defence* of the store, of course;—so may the broken bottles, stuck on the top of a wall. But the lock of your cupboard is not the contents of it.

and plenty of salted pork, pickled walnuts, potted shrimps, or other conserves, in the cupboard; that everybody had jewels enough, and some of the biggest laid by, in treasuries and museums; and, of persons caring for such things, that everybody had as many books and pictures as they could read or look at; with quantities of the highest quality besides, in easily accessible public libraries and galleries.

Now the wretches who have, at present, the teaching of the people in their hands, through the public press, tell them that it is not 'practical' to attempt to bring about this state of things;—and that their government, or money-collecting machine, must not buy wine, potatoes, jewels, or pictures for them; but *must* buy iron plates two feet thick, gunpowder, and red tape. And this popular instruction is given, you will find, in the end, by persons who know that they could not get a percentage themselves, (without the public's coming to know it,) on buying potatoes or pictures; but *can* get it, and a large one, on manufacturing iron, on committing wholesale murder, or on tying up papers with red tape.

Now the St. George's Company propose to themselves,—and, if the God they believe in, lives, will assuredly succeed in their proposition,—to put an end to this rascally and inhuman state of things, and bring about an honest and human state of them, instead. And they have already actually begun the accumulation of a National Store of

good and useful things; by the collection and administration of which, they are not themselves to derive any gain whatsoever, but the Nation only.

We are, therefore, at present, as I said at first, a company established for a charitable purpose; the object of charity being the entire body of the British nation, now paying taxes to cheating capitalists. But we hope to include, finally, in our ranks a large number of the people themselves, and to make quite a different sort of people of them, carrying out our company's laws, to the abolition of many existing interests, and in abrogation of many existing arrangements.

And the laws which we hope thus to see accepted are none of them new; but have been already recommended by all wise men, and practised by all truly prosperous states; nor is there anything whatever new in the modes of administration proposed;—and especially be it noted, there is nothing of the present leader's fancies, in any part or character of the scheme—which is merely the application, to our nationally diseased thoughts and practices, of the direct precepts of the true sages of past time, who are every one of them in harmony concerning all that is necessary for men to do, feel, and know.

And we hope to establish these laws, not by violence, but by obeying them ourselves, to the extent of which existing circumstances admit; and so gradually showing the advantage of them, and making them acceptable to others. Not that, for

the enforcement of some of them, (the abolition of all manufactures that make the air unwholesome, for instance,) we shall hesitate to use the strong hand, when once our hands are strong. But we shall not begin by street riots to throw down our neighbour's chimneys, or break his machinery;—though what we shall *end* in doing—God knows, not I,—but I have my own thoughts concerning it; not at present needing exposition.

The Companions, for the most part, will remain exactly in the condition of life they held before entering the Society; but they will direct all their powers, and some part of their revenues, in that condition, to the advance of its interests. We hold it shortsighted and ruinous policy to form separate institutions, or attempt the sudden establishment of new systems of labour. Every one of us must use the advantages he now possesses, whatever they may be, and contend with the difficulties arising out of his present position, gradually modifying it, as he can, into conformity with the laws which the Society desires may be ultimately observed by all its members.

The first of our conditions of Companionship is Honesty. We are a company of honest persons, vowing to have no fellowship with dishonest ones. Persons who do not know the meaning of the word 'Honesty,' or who would in anywise, for selfish convenience, tolerate any manner of cheating or lying, either in others or themselves, we class indiscriminately with the self-conscious rogues, for whom

we have more respect ; and our separation from all such is to be quite manifest and unmistakable. We do not go into monasteries,—we seek no freedom of conscience in foreign lands,—we profess no severities of asceticism at home. We simply refuse to have any dealings with rogues, whether at home or abroad.

I repeat, for this must be strictly understood, we are a company of honest persons ; and will add to ourselves none but persons of that quality. We, for our own part, entirely decline to live by passing bad half-crowns, by selling bad goods, or by lying as to their relative quality. And we hold only such communication with persons guilty of such practices, as we should with any other manner of thieves or liars.

It will follow that anything gravely said by a Companion of St. George may be, without investigation, believed ; and anything sold by one, without scrutiny, bought for what it is said to be,—of which recovery of old principles of human speech and commerce, no words can set forth the infinitude of beneficial consequences, when it is once brought about among a discernible and every day increasing body of persons.

The second condition of Companionship is the resolution, so far as we have ability, to earn our own living with our own hands ; and not to allow, much less compel, other people to work for us : this duty being of double force,—first, as necessary to our own health and honour ; but much more, as striking

home at the ghastly universal crime of modern society,—stealing the labourer's bread from him, (making him work, that is to say, for our's, as well as his own,) and then abusing and despising him for the degradation of character which his perpetual toil involves ; * deliberately, in many cases, refusing to encourage him in economy, that we may have him at our mercy to grind in the mill ; always selling as much gin and beer to him as we can persuade him to swill, at the rate of twenty-pence for two-pence worth, (see Letter XXVII.,) to fill our own pockets ; and teaching him pious catechisms, that we may keep him our quiet slave.

We cannot, at present, all obey this great law concerning labour, however willing we may be ; for we may not, in the condition of life in which we have been brought up, have been taught any manual labour by which we now could make a living. I myself, the present Master of the Society, cannot obey this, its second main law ; but then I am only a makeshift Master, taking the place till somebody more fit for it be found. Sir Walter Scott's life, in the full strength of it at Ashestiel, and early at Abbotsford, with his literary work done by ten, or at latest twelve in the morning ; and the rest of the day spent in useful work with Tom Purdie in his woods, is a model of wise moral management of mind and body, for men of true literary power ; but

* See Letter XI. (Vol. I., pp. 209-213), the most pregnant five pages in the entire series of these letters ; and compare that for January of this year, and for April. (Vol. III. pp. 235-237, 300.)

I had neither the country training of body, nor have the natural strength of brain, which can reach this ideal in anywise. Sir Walter wrote as a stream flows; but I do all my brain-work like a wrung sponge, and am tired out, and good for nothing, after it. Sir Walter was in the open air, farm-bred, and playing with lambs, while I was a poor little Cockney wretch, playing, in a dark London nursery, with a bunch of keys. I do the best I can, and know what ought to be: and that is all the Company really need of me. I would fain, at this moment, both for pleasure and duty's sake, be cutting the dead stems out of my wood, or learning to build a dry stone wall under my good mason, Mr. Usher, than writing these institutes of St. George; but the institutes are needed, and must be written by me, since there is nobody else to write them.

Any one, therefore, may be a Companion of St. George who sincerely does what they can, to make themselves useful, and earn their daily bread by their own labour: and some forms of intellectual or artistic labour, inconsistent (as a musician's) with other manual labour, are accepted by the Society as useful; provided they be truly undertaken for the good and help of all; and that the intellectual labourer ask no more pay than any other workman. A scholar can generally live on less food than a ploughman, and there is no conceivable reason why he should have more. And if he be a false-hearted scholar, or a bad painter or fiddler, there is infinite reason why he should have less. My readers may

have been surprised at the instant and eager assertion, as of a leading principle, in the first of these letters, (January '71,) that people cannot live by art. But I spoke swiftly, because the attempt so to live is among the worst possible ways they can take of injurious begging. There are a few, a very few persons born in each generation, whose words are worth hearing, whose art is worth seeing. These born few will preach, or sing, or paint, in spite of you ; they will starve-like grasshoppers, rather than stop singing; and even if you don't choose to listen, it is charitable to throw them some crumbs to keep them alive. But the people who take to writing or painting as a means of livelihood, because they think it genteel, are just by so much more contemptible than common beggars, in that they are noisy and offensive beggars. I am quite willing to pay for keeping our poor vagabonds in the workhouse ; but not to pay them for grinding organs outside my door, defacing the streets with bills and caricatures, tempting young girls to read rubbishy novels, or deceiving the whole nation to its ruin, in a thousand leagues square of dirtily printed falsehood, every morning at breakfast. Whatever in literature, art, or religion, is done for money, is poisonous itself ; and doubly deadly, in preventing the hearing or seeing of the noble literature and art which have been done for love and truth. If people cannot make their bread by honest labour, let them at least make no noise about the streets ; but hold their tongues, and hold out their idle hands humbly ; and they shall be fed kindly.

Then the third condition of Companionship is, that, after we have done as much manual work as will earn our food, we all of us discipline ourselves, our children, and any one else willing to be taught, in all the branches of honourable knowledge and graceful art attainable by us. Having honestly obtained our meat and drink, and having sufficiently eaten and drunken, we proceed, during the rest of the day, to seek after things better than meat and drink ; and to provide for the nobler necessities of what, in ancient days, Englishmen used to call their souls.

To this end, we shall, as we increase in numbers, establish such churches and schools as may best guide religious feeling, and diffuse the love of sound learning and prudent art. And when I set myself first to the work of forming the Society, I was induced to do so chiefly by the consciousness that the balanced unison of artistic sensibility with scientific faculty, which enabled me at once to love Giotto, and learn from Galileo, gave me singular advantages for a work of this kind. More particularly, the course of study through which, after being trained in the severest schools of Protestant divinity, I became acquainted with the mythology of Greece, and legends of Rome, in their most vivid power over the believing minds of both nations, permits me now to accept with freedom and respect the concurrence of a wider range of persons holding different views on religious subjects, than any other scholar I know, at the present day, in England,

would feel himself secure in the hope of reconciling to a common duty, and in uncontested elements of faith.

The scheme, and elementary means, of this common education, I am now occupied in arranging and choosing as I best may.* In especial, I have set myself to write three grammars—of geology, botany, and zoology,—which will contain nothing but indisputable facts in those three branches of proper human learning; and which, if I live a little longer, will embrace as many facts as any ordinary school-boy or schoolgirl need be taught. In these three grammars ('Deucalion,' 'Proserpina,' and 'Love's Meinie,')† I shall accept every aid that sensible and earnest men of science can spare me, towards the task of popular education: and I hope to keep thankful records of the names of the persons who are making true discoveries in any of these sciences, and of the dates of such discovery, which shall be unassailably trustworthy as far as they extend. I hope also to be able to choose, and in some degree provide, a body of popular literature of entirely serviceable quality. Of some of the most precious books needed, I am preparing, with the help of my friends, new editions, for a common possession in all our school libraries.

If I have powers fitted for this task, (and I should not have attempted it but in conviction that I have,)

* See Fors for January of this year, pp. 247-249.

† This book I shall extend, if time be given me, from its first proposed form into a parallel one with the two others.

- they are owing mainly to this one condition of my life, that, from my youth up, I have been seeking the fame, and honouring the work, of others ;—never my own. I first was driven into literature that I might defend the fame of Turner ; since that day I have been explaining the power, or proclaiming the praise, of Tintoret,—of Luini,—of Carpaccio,—of Botticelli,—of Carlyle ;—never thinking for an instant of myself: and sacrificing what little faculty, and large pleasure, I had in painting, either from nature or noble art, that, if possible, I might bring others to see what I rejoiced in, and understand what I had deciphered. There has been no heroism in this, nor virtue ;—but only, as far as I am myself concerned, quaint ordering of Fate ; but the result is, that I *have* at last obtained an instinct of impartial and reverent judgment, which sternly fits me for this final work, to which, if to anything, I was appointed.

And for the right doing of it, and for all future work of the same kind, requiring to be done for the Society by other persons, it is absolutely needful that the person charged with it should be implicitly trusted, and accurately obeyed by the Companions, in all matters necessary to the working of the Society. He cannot lose his time in contention or persuasion ; he must act undisturbedly, or his mind will not suffice for its toil ; and with concurrence of all the Society's power, or half their power will be wasted, and the whole perverted, by hesitation, and opposition. His authority over them must

correspond precisely, in the war against the poverty and vice of the State, to that of a Roman Dictator, in his war against its external enemies.

Of a Roman '*Dictator*,' I say, observe; not a Roman '*Emperor*.' It is not the command of private will, but the dictation of necessary law, which the Society obeys:—only, the obedience must be absolute, and without question; faithful to the uttermost,—that is to say, trusting to the uttermost. The practice of faith and obedience to some of our fellow-creatures is the alphabet by which we learn the higher obedience to heaven; and it is not only needful to the prosperity of all noble united action, but essential to the happiness of all noble living spirits.

I have not, in my past letters, much noticed this condition of the Society's work; because its explanation will involve that of our religious creed to the full; and its enforcement must be in the very teeth of the mad-dog's creed of modernism, "I will not be dictated to," which contains the essence of all diabolical error. For, in some, the moral scale is raised exactly according to the degree and motive of obedience. To be disobedient through temptation, is human sin; but to be disobedient for the sake of disobedience, fiendish sin. To be obedient for the sake of success in conduct, is human virtue; but to be obedient for the sake of obedience, angelic virtue.

The constitution of the Society is to be, therefore, that of an aristocracy electing an absolute chief, (as the Senate of Rome their Dictator, or the Senate of

Venice their Doge,) who is to be entirely responsible for the conduct of the Society's affairs ; to appoint its principal officers, and to grant or refuse admission to candidates for Companionship. But he is liable to deposition at any moment, by a vote of the majority of the Companions ; and is to have no control over the property of the Society, but through the Trustees in whom that property is vested.

And now, for farther explanation of the details of our constitution and design, I must refer the reader to the Fors for March of this year ; and, if he desires to pursue his inquiry, to the 8th, 9th, 11th, 17th, and 19th Letters of the previous series. These state clearly what we propose to do, and how : but for defence of our principles, the entire series of Letters must be studied ; and that with quiet attention, for not a word of them has been written but with purpose. Some parts of the plan are confessedly unexplained, and others obscurely hinted at ; nor do I choose to say how much of this indistinctness has been intentional. But I am well assured that if any patient and candid person cares to understand the book, and master its contents, he may do so with less pains than would be required for the reading of any ordinary philosophical treatise on equally important subjects.

Only readers should be clearly aware of one peculiarity in the manner of my writing in Fors, which might otherwise much mislead them :—namely, that if they will enclose in brackets with their pen, passages of evident irony, all the rest of the book

is written with absolute seriousness and literalness of meaning. The violence, or grotesque aspect, of a statement may seem as if I were mocking; but this comes mainly of my endeavour to bring the absolute truth out into pure crystalline structure, unmodified by disguise of custom, or obscurity of language; for the result of that process is continually to reduce the facts into a form so contrary, if theoretical, to our ordinary impressions, and so contrary, if moral, to our ordinary practice, that the straightforward statement of them looks like a jest. But every such apparent jest will be found, if you think of it, a pure, very dreadful, and utterly imperious veracity.

With this understanding, the following series of aphorisms contain the gist of the book, and may serve to facilitate the arrangement of its incidental matter.

1. Any form of government will work, provided the governors are real, and the people obey them; and none will work, if the governors are unreal, or the people disobedient. If you mean to have logs for kings, no quantity of liberty in choice of the wood will be of any profit to you:—nor will the wisest or best governor be able to serve you, if you mean to discuss his orders instead of obeying them. Read carefully on this matter Letter XIII., [Vol. I., pp. 259, 260.]

2. The first duty of government is to see that the people have food, fuel, and clothes. The second, that they have means of moral and intellectual education.

3. Food, fuel, and clothes can only be got out of the ground, or sea, by muscular labour; and no man has any business to have any, unless he has done, if able, the muscular work necessary to produce his portion, or to render, (as the labour of a surgeon or a physician renders,) equivalent benefit to life. It indeed saves both toil and time that one man should dig, another bake, and another tan; but the digger, baker, and tanner are alike bound to do their equal day's duty; and the business of the government is to see that they have done it, before it gives any one of them their dinner.

4. While the daily teaching of God's truth, doing of His justice, and heroic bearing of His sword, are to be required of every human soul according to its ability, the mercenary professions of preaching, law-giving, and fighting must be entirely abolished.

5. Scholars, painters, and musicians may be advisedly kept, on due pittance, to instruct or amuse the labourer after, or at, his work; provided the duty be severely restricted to those who have high special gifts of voice, touch, and imagination;* and that the possessors of these melodious lips, light-fingered hands, and lively brains, do resolutely undergo the normal discipline necessary to ensure their skill; the people whom they are to please understanding always that they cannot employ these tricky artists

* Such limitation being secured by the severity of the required education in the public schools of art, and thought; and by the high standard of examination fixed before granting license of exhibition, in the public theatres, or picture galleries.

without working double-tides themselves, to provide them with beef and ale.

6. The duty of the government, as regards the distribution of its work, is to attend first to the wants of the most necessitous; therefore, to take particular charge of the back streets of every town; leaving the fine ones, more or less, according to their finery, to take care of themselves. And it is the duty of magistrates, and other persons in authority, but especially of all bishops, to know thoroughly the numbers, means of subsistence, and modes of life of the poorest persons in the community, and to be sure that *they* at least are virtuous and comfortable; for if poor persons be not virtuous, after all the wholesome discipline of poverty, what must be the state of the rich, under their perilous trials and temptations? *—but, on the other hand, if the poor are made comfortable and good, the rich have a fair chance of entering the kingdom of heaven also, if they choose to live honourably and decently.

* Here is just an instance of what might at first seem to be a jest; but is a serious and straightforward corollary from the eternally true fact stated by St. Paul to Timothy: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition;" and by Horace

"Quanto quisque sibi plura negaverit
Ab Dis plura feret."

The passage might at first be thought inconsistent with what is said above of the 'degradation' which perpetual toil involves. But toil and poverty are two different things. Poverty ennobles, and secures; toil degrades, and endangers. We are all bound to fulfil our task; but happy only if we can also enter into our rest.

7. Since all are to be made to labour for their living, and it is not possible to labour without materials and tools, these must be provided by the government, for all persons, in the necessary quantities. If bricks are to be made, clay and straw must be provided ; if sheep are to be kept, grass ; if coats are to be made, cloth ; if oakum to be picked, oakum. All these raw materials, with the tools for working them, must be provided by the government, at first, free of cost to the labourer, the value of them being returned to them as the first-fruits of his toil ; and no pawnbrokers or usurers may be allowed to live by lending sea to fishermen, air to fowlers, land to farmers, crooks to shepherds, or bellows to smiths.

8. When the lands and seas belonging to any nation are all properly divided, cultivated, and fished, its population cannot be increased, except by importing food in exchange for useless articles,—that is to say, by living as the toy-manufacturers of some independent nation, which can both feed itself, and afford to buy toys besides. But no nation can long exist in this servile state. It must either emigrate, and form colonies to assist in cultivating the land which feeds it, or become entirely slavish and debased. The moment any nation begins to import food,* its political power and moral worth are ended.

* It may always import such food as its climate cannot produce, in exchange for such food as it can ; it may buy oranges with corn, or pepper with cheese. But not with articles that do not support

9. All the food, clothing, and fuel required by men, can be produced by the labour of their own arms on the earth and sea; all food is appointed to be so produced, and *must* be so produced, at their peril. If instead of taking the quantity of exercise made necessary to their bodies by God, in the work appointed by God, they take it in hunting or shooting, they become ignorant, irreligious, and finally insane, and seek to live by fighting as well as by hunting; whence the type of Nimrod, in the circle of the Hell-towers, which I desired you to study in Dante. If they do not take exercise at all, they become sensual, and insane in worse ways. *And it is physically impossible that true religious knowledge, or pure morality, should exist among any classes of a nation who do not work with their hands for their bread.* Read Letter XI. carefully.

10. The use of machinery* in agriculture throws a certain number of persons out of wholesome employment, who must thenceforward either do nothing, or mischief. The use of machinery in art destroys the national intellect; and, finally, renders all luxury impossible. All machinery needful in

life. Separate *cities* may honourably produce saleable art; Limoges its enamel, Sheffield its whittle; but a *nation* must not live on enamel or whittles.

* Foolish people are continually quibbling and stupefying themselves about the word 'machine.' Briefly, any instrument is a machine so far as its action is, in any particular, or moment, beyond the control of the human hand. A violin, a pencil, and a plough, are tools, not machines. A grinding organ, or a windmill, is a machine, not a tool: often the two are combined; thus a lathe is a machine, and the workman's chisel, used at it, a tool.

ordinary life to supplement human or animal labour may be moved by wind or water: while steam, or any modes of *heat-power*, may only be employed justifiably under extreme or special conditions of need; as for speed on main lines of communication, and for raising water from great depths, or other such work beyond human strength.

11. No true luxury, wealth, or religion is possible to dirty persons; nor is it decent or human to attempt to compass any temporal prosperity whatever by the sacrifice of cleanliness. The speedy abolition of all abolishable filth is the first process of education; * the principles of which I state in the second group of aphorisms following.

12. All education must be moral first; intellectual secondarily. Intellectual, before—(much more without)—moral education, is, in completeness, impossible; and in incompleteness, a calamity.

13. Moral education begins in making the creature to be educated, clean, and obedient. This must be done thoroughly, and at any cost, and with any kind of compulsion rendered necessary by the nature of the animal, be it dog, child, or man.

14. Moral education consists next in making the creature practically serviceable to other creatures, according to the nature and extent of its own

* The ghastly squalor of the once lovely fields of Dulwich, trampled into mud, and strewn with rags and paper by the filthy London population, bred in cigar smoke, which is attracted by the Crystal Palace, would alone neutralize all possible gentlemanly education in the district.

capacities; taking care that these be healthily developed in such service. It may be a question how long, and to what extent, boys and girls of fine race may be allowed to run in the paddock before they are broken; but assuredly the sooner they are put to such work as they are able for, the better. Moral education is summed when the creature has been made to do its work with delight, and thoroughly; but this cannot be until some degree of intellectual education has been given also.

15. Intellectual education consists in giving the creature the faculties of admiration, hope, and love.

These are to be taught by the study of beautiful Nature; the sight and history of noble persons; and the setting forth of noble objects of action.

16. Since all noble persons hitherto existent in the world have trusted in the government of it by a supreme Spirit, and in that trust, or faith, have performed all their great actions, the history of these persons will finally mean the history of their faith; and the sum of intellectual education will be the separation of what is inhuman, in such faiths, and therefore perishing, from what is human, and, for human creatures, eternally true.

These sixteen aphorisms contain, as plainly as I can speak it, the substance of what I have hitherto taught, and am now purposed to enforce practice of, as far as I am able. It is no business of mine to think about possibilities;—any day, any moment, may raise up some one to take the carrying forward of the plan out of my hands, or to furnish me with

larger means of prosecuting it ; meantime, neither hastening nor slackening, I shall go on doing what I can, with the people, few or many, who are ready to help me.

Such help (to conclude with what simplest practical direction I can,) may be given me by any persons interested in my plans, mainly by sending me money ; secondly, by acting out as much as they agree with of the directions for private life given in Fors ; and thirdly, by promulgating and recommending such principles. If they wish to do more than this, and to become actual members of the Company, they must write to me, giving a short and clear account of their past lives, and present circumstances. I then examine them on such points as seem to me necessary ; and if I accept them, I inscribe their names in the roll, at Corpus Christi College, with two of our masters for witnesses. This roll of the Company is written, hitherto, on the blank leaves of an eleventh-century MS. of the Gospels, always kept in my rooms ; and would enable the Trustees, in case of my death, at once to consult the Companions respecting the disposition of the Society's property. As to the legal tenure of that property, I have taken counsel with my lawyer-friends till I am tired ; and I purpose henceforward to leave all such legal arrangements to the discretion of the Companions themselves.

LETTER LXVIII

BAGS THAT W'AX OLD

I FIND that the letter which I wrote in the Fors of May to those two children, generally pleases the parents and guardians of children. Several nice ones ask me to print it separately: I have done so; and commend it, to-day, to the attention of the parents and guardians also. For the gist of it is, that the children are told to give up all they have, and never to be vexed. That is the first Rule of St. George, as applied to children,—to hold their childish things for 'God, and never to mind losing anything.

But the parents and guardians are not yet, it seems to me, well aware that St George's law is the same for grown-up people as for little ones. To hold all they have,—all their grown-up things,—for God, and never to mind losing anything,—silver or gold, house or lands, son or daughter;—law seldom so much as even attempted to be observed! And, indeed, circumstances have chanced, since I wrote that Fors, which have caused me to consider much how curious it is that when good people lose their own son or daughter, even though they have reason to think

God has found what they have lost, they are greatly vexed about it: but if they only hear of other people losing *their* sons or daughters,—though they have reason to think God has *not* found them, but that the wild beasts of the wilderness have torn them,—for such loss they are usually not vexed in anywise. To-day, nevertheless, I am not concerned with the stewardship of these spirit-treasures, but only with the stewardship of money or lands, and proper manner of holding such by Christians. For it is important that the accepted Companions should now understand that although, in *creed*, I ask only so much consent as may include Christian, Jew, Turk, and Greek,—in *conduct*, the Society is to be regulated at *least* by the law of Christ. It may be, that as we fix our laws in further detail, we may add some of the heavier yokes of Lycurgus, or Numa, or John the Baptist: and, though the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and turning water into wine, we may think it needful to try how some of us like living on locusts, or wild honey, or Spartan broth. But at least, I repeat, we are here, in England, to obey the law of Christ, if nothing more.

Now the law of Christ about money and other forms of personal wealth, is taught, first in parables, in which He likens Himself to the masters of this world, and explains the conduct which Christians should hold to Him, their heavenly Master, by that which they hold on earth, to earthly ones.

He likens Himself in these stories, several times

to unkind or unjust masters, and especially to hard and usurious ones. And the gist of the parables in each case is, "If ye do so, and are thus faithful to hard and cruel masters, in earthly things, how much more should ye be faithful to a merciful Master, in heavenly things?"

Which argument, evil-minded men wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction. And instead of reading, for instance, in the parable of the Usurer, the intended lesson of industry in the employment of God's gifts, they read in it a justification of the crime which, in other parts of the same scripture, is directly forbidden. And there is indeed no doubt that, if the other prophetic parts of the Bible be true, these stories are so worded that they *may* be touchstones of the heart. They are nets, which sift the kindly reader from the selfish. The parable of the Usurer is like a mill sieve:—the fine flour falls through it, bolted finer; the chaff sticks in it.

Therefore, the only way to understand these difficult parts of the Bible, or even to approach them with safety, is first to read and obey the easy ones. Then the difficult ones all become beautiful and clear:—otherwise they remain venomous enigmas, with a Sphinx of destruction provoking false souls to read them, and ruining them in their own replies.

Now the orders, "not to lay up treasures for ourselves on earth," and to "sell that we have, and give alms," and to "provide ourselves bags which

wax not old," are perfectly direct, unmistakable,—universal; and while we are not at all likely to be blamed by God for not imitating Him as a Judge, we shall assuredly be condemned by Him for not, under Judgment, doing as we were bid. But even if we do not feel able to obey these orders, if we must and will lay up treasures on earth, and provide ourselves bags with holes in them,—God may perhaps still, with scorn, permit us in our weakness, provided we are content with our earthly treasures, when we have got them, and don't oppress our brethren, and grind down their souls with them. We may have our old bag about our neck, if we will, and go to heaven like beggars;—but if we sell our brother also, and put the price of his life in the bag, we need not think to enter the kingdom of God so loaded. A rich man may, though hardly, enter the kingdom of heaven without repenting him of his riches; but not the thief, without repenting his theft; nor the adulterer, without repenting his adultery; nor the usurer, without repenting his usury.

The nature of which last sin, let us now clearly understand, once for all.

Usury is properly the taking of money for the loan or use of anything, (over and above what pays for wear and tear,) such use involving no care or labour on the part of the lender. It includes all investments of capital whatsoever, returning 'dividends,' as distinguished from labour wages, or profits. Thus anybody who works on a railroad

as platelayer, or stoker, has a right to wages for his work; and any inspector of wheels or rails has a right to payment for such inspection; but idle persons who have only paid a hundred pounds towards the road-making, have a right to the return of the hundred pounds,—and no more. If they take a farthing more, they are usurers. They may take fifty pounds for two years, twenty-five for four, five for twenty, or one for a hundred. But the first farthing they take more than their hundred, be it sooner or later, is usury.

Again, when we build a house, and let it, we have a right to as much rent as will return us the wages of our labour, and the sum of our outlay. If, as in ordinary cases, not labouring with our hands or head, we have simply paid—say £1000—to get the house built, we have a right to the £1000 back again at once, if we sell it; or, if we let it, to £500 rent during two years, or £100 rent during ten years, or £10 rent during a hundred years. But if, sooner or later, we take a pound more than the thousand, we are usurers.

And thus in all other possible or conceivable cases, the moment our capital is ‘increased,’ by having lent it, be it but in the estimation of a hair, that hair’s-breadth of increase is usury, just as much as stealing a farthing is theft, no less than stealing a million.

But usury is worse than theft, in so far as it is obtained either by deceiving people, or distressing them; generally by both: and finally by deceiving

the usurer himself, who comes to think that usury is a real increase, and that money can grow of money; whereas all usury is increase to one person only by decrease to another; and every gain of calculated Increment to the Rich, is balanced by its mathematical equivalent of Decrement to the Poor. The Rich have hitherto only counted their gain; but the day is coming, when the Poor will also count their loss,—with political results hitherto unparalleled.

For instance, my good old hairdresser at Camberwell came to me the other day, very uncomfortable about his rent. He wanted a pound or two to make it up; and none of his customers wanted their hair cut. I gave him the pound or two,—with the result, I hope my readers have sagacity enough to observe, of distinct decrement to *me*, as increment to the landlord;—and then enquired of him, how much he had paid for rent, during his life. On rough calculation, the total sum proved to be between 1,500 and 1,700 pounds. And after paying this sum,—earned, shilling by shilling, with careful snippings, and studiously skilful manipulation of tongs,—here is my poor old friend, now past sixty, practically without a roof over his head;—just as roofless in his old age as he was in the first days of life,—and nervously wandering about Peckham Rye and East Norwood, in the east winter winds, to see if, perchance, any old customers will buy some balm for their thinning locks—and give him the blessed balm of an odd

half-crown or two, to rent shelter for his own, for three months more.

Now, supposing that £1,500 of his had been properly laid out, on the edification of lodgings for him, £500 should have built him a serviceable tenement and shop; another £500 have met the necessary repairing expenses for forty years; and at this moment he ought to have had his efficient freehold cottage, with tile and wall right weather-proof, and a nice little nest-egg of five hundred pounds in the Bank, besides. But instead of this, the thousand pounds has gone in payment to slovenly builders, each getting their own percentage, and doing as bad work as possible, under the direction of landlords paying for as little as possible of any sort of work. And the odd five hundred has gone into the landlord's pocket. Pure increment to him; pure decrement to my decoratively laborious friend. No gain 'begotten' of money; and simple subtraction from the pocket of the labouring person, and simple addition to the pocket of the idle one.

I have no mind to waste the space of Fors in giving variety of instances. Any honest and sensible reader, if he chooses, can think out the truth in such matters for himself. If he be dishonest, or foolish, no one can teach him. If he is resolved to find reason or excuse for things as they are, he may find refuge in one lie after another; and, dislodged from each in turn, fly from the last back to the one he began with. But

there will not long be need for debate—nor time for it. Not all the lying lips of commercial Europe can much longer deceive the people in their rapidly increasing distress, nor arrest their straight battle with the cause of it. Through what confused noise and garments rolled in blood,—through what burning and fuel of fire, they will work out their victory,—God only knows, nor what they will do to Barabbas, when they have found out that he *is* a Robber and not a King. But that discovery of his character and capacity draws very near: and no less change in the world's ways than the former fall of Feudalism itself.

In the meantime, for those of us who are Christians, our own way is plain. We can with perfect ease ascertain what usury is; and in what express terms forbidden. I had partly prepared, for this Fors, and am able to give, as soon as needful, an analysis of the terms 'Increase' and 'Usury' throughout the Old and New Testaments. But the perpetual confusion of the English terms when the Greek and Latin are clear, (especially by using the word 'increase' in one place, and 'generation' in another, at the English translator's pleasure,) renders the matter too intricate for the general reader, though intensely interesting to any honest scholar. I content myself, therefore, with giving the plain Greek and plain English of Leviticus xxv. 35 to 37.*

* The twenty-third verse of the same chapter is to be the shield-legend of the St. George's Company.

Εὰν δὲ πένηται ὁ ἀδελφός σου, καὶ ἀδυνατήσῃ ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ παρὰ σοὶ, ἀντιλήψῃ αὐτοῦ ὡς προσηλύτου καὶ παροίκου, καὶ ζήσεται ὁ ἀδελφός σου μετὰ σοῦ.

Οὐ λήψῃ παρ αὐτοῦ τόκον, οἷδὲ ἐπὶ πλήθει, καὶ φοβηθήσῃ τὸν θεόν σου ἐγὼ κύριος· καὶ ζήσεται ὁ ἀδελφός σου μετὰ σοῦ.

Τὸ ἀργύριόν σου οὐ δώσεις αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τόκῳ, καὶ ἐπὶ πλεονασμῷ οὐ δώσεις αὐτῷ τὰ βρώματά σου.

“And if thy brother be poor, and powerless with his hands, at thy side, thou shalt take his part upon thee, to help him,* as thy proselyte and thy neighbour; and thy brother shall live with thee. Thou shalt take no usury of him, nor anything over and above, and thou shalt fear thy God. I am the Lord, and thy brother shall live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money, for usury; and thou shalt not give him thy food, for increase.”

There is the simple law for all of us;—one of those which Christ assuredly came not to destroy, but to fulfil: and there is no national prosperity to be had but in obedience to it.

How we usurers are to live, with the hope of our gains gone, is precisely the old temple of Diana question. How Robin Hood or Cœur de Lion were to live without arrow or axe, would have been as strange a question to *them*, in their day. And there are many amiable persons who

* Meaning, to do his work instead of him. Compare Acts xx. 35. “I have showed you all things, how that, so labouring, ye ought to *support* the weak.”

will not directly see their way, any more than I do myself, to an honest life; only, let us be sure that this we are leading now is a dishonest one; and worse, (if Dante and Shakspeare's mind on the matter are worth any heed, of which more in due time,) being neither more nor less than a spiritual manner of cannibalism, which, so long as we persist in, every word spoken in Scripture of those who "eat my people as they eat bread," is spoken directly of us. It may be an encouragement to some of us—especially those evangelically bred—in weaning ourselves slowly from such habits, to think of our dear old converted friend, Friday. We need not fear our power of becoming good Christians yet, if we will: so only that we understand, finally and utterly, that all gain, increase, interest, or whatever else you call it or think it, to the lender of capital, is loss, decrease, and dis-interest, to the borrower of capital. Every farthing we, who lend the tool, make, the borrower of the tool loses. And all the idiotical calculations of what money comes to, in so many years, simply ignore the debit side of the book, on which the Labourer's Deficit is precisely equal to the Capitalist's Efficit. I saw an estimate made by some blockhead in an American paper, the other day, of the weight of gold which a hundred years' 'interest' on such and such funds would load the earth with! Not even of wealth in that solid form, could the poor wretch perceive so much of the truth as that the gold he put on the earth

above, he must dig out of the earth below! But the mischief in real life* is far deeper on the negative side, than the good on the positive. The debt of the borrower loads his heart, cramps his hands, and dulls his labour. The gain of the lender hardens his heart, fouls his brain, and puts every means of mischief into his otherwise clumsy and artless hands.

But here, in good time, is one example of honest living sent me worth taking grave note of.

In my first inaugural lecture on Art at Oxford, given in the theatre, (full crowded to hear what first words might be uttered in the University on so unheard-of a subject,) I closed by telling my audience—to the amusement of some, the offence of others, and the disapproval of all,—that the entire system of their art-studies must be regulated with a view to the primal art, which many of them would soon have to learn, that of getting their food out of the Ground, or out of the Sea.

Time has worn on; and, last year, a Christ-Church man, an excellent scholar, came to talk with me over his brother's prospects in life, and his own. For himself, he proposed, and very earnestly, considering his youth and gifts, (lying, as far as I could judge, more towards the rifle-ground than in other directions,) to go into the Church: but for his brother, he was anxious, as were all his relatives;—said brother having broken away from such modes of living as the relatives held orthodox, and taken to catching and potting of salmon on the Columbia

River ; having farther transgressed all the proprieties of civilized society by providing himself violently with the ' capital ' necessary for setting up in that line of business, and ' stealing a boat.' How many boats, with nine boilers each in them, the gentlemen of Her Majesty's navy construct annually with money violently abstracted out of my poor pockets, and those of other peaceful labourers,—boats not to catch salmon with, or any other good thing, but simply to amuse themselves, and blow up stokers with,—civilized society may perhaps in time learn to consider. In the meantime, I consoled my young St. Peter as well as I could for his brother's carnal falling away ; represented to him that, without occasional fishing for salmon, there would soon be no men left to fish for : and that even this tremendous violation of the eighth commandment, to the extent of the abstraction of a boat, might not perchance, with due penitence, keep the young vagabond wholly hopeless of Paradise ; my own private opinion being that the British public would, on the whole, benefit more by the proceedings of the young pirate, if he provided them annually with a sufficient quantity of potted salmon, than by the conscientious, but more costly, ministry of his brother, who, provided with the larger boat-apparatus of a nave, and the mast of a steeple, proposed to employ this naval capital only in the provision of potted talk.

And finding that, in spite of the opinion of society, there were still bowels of mercies in this good youth,

yearning after his brother, I got him to copy for me some of the brother's letters from the Columbia River, confessing his piratical proceedings, (as to which I, for one, give him a Christian man's absolution without more ado;) and account of his farther life in those parts—a life which appears to me, on the whole, so brave, exemplary, and wise, that I am going to ask the boy to become a Companion of St. George forthwith, and send him a collar of the Order, (as soon as we have got gold to make collars of,) with a little special pictorial chasing upon it, representing the Miraculous Draught of Fishes.

LETTER LXIX

THE MESSAGE OF JAEI-ATROPOS

I HAVE just been down to Barmouth to see the tenants on the first bit of ground,—noble crystalline rock, I am thankful to say,—possessed by St. George in the island.

I find the rain coming through roofs, and the wind through walls, more than I think proper, and have ordered repairs; and for some time to come, the little rents of these cottages will be spent entirely in the bettering of them, or in extending some garden ground, fenced with furze hedge against the west wind by the most ingenious of our tenants.

And in connection with this first—however small—beginning under my own eyes of St. George's work,—(already some repairs had been made by my direction, under the superintendence of the donor of the land, Mrs. Talbot, before I could go to see the place)—I must state again clearly our St. George's principle of rent. It is taken first as the acknowledgment of the authority of the Society over the land, and in the amount judged by the Master to be just, according to the circumstances of the person and place, for the tenant to pay as a contribution to the funds of the Society. The tenant has no claim to

the return of the rent in improvements on his ground or his house ; and I order the repairs at Barmouth as part of the Company's general action, not as return of the rent to the tenant. The reader will thus see that our so-called 'rents' are in fact taxes laid on the tenants for the advancement of the work of the Company. And all so-called rents are, in like manner, taxes laid on the labourer for the advancement of the work of his landlord. If that work be beneficial, on the whole, to the estate, and of all who live on it, the rents are on a right footing ; but if they are abstracted by the landlord to his own private uses, he is merely another form of the old mediæval Knight of Evilstone, living as hawk in eyrie.

It chanced, while I set this work on foot at Barmouth, that a paragraph was sent me out of a Carlisle paper, giving the information that all Lord Lonsdale's tenants have received notice to quit, that the farms might be re-valued. I requested my correspondent to ascertain for me the manner of the holdings on Lord Lonsdale's estates , his reply is—

“ As a rule, these tenants have no leases. . . . When the new rents are arranged, it is expected that leases will then be granted . . . and the farmers, with or without leases, but with higher rents, may be left to bear alone the ebb of the tide that is evidently on the turn. . . . I have been studying this matter—the increase of land-rents—for many years, and consider it is very much to blame for the present high prices of all land produce, and the distress amongst the poorest of our population,

as well as being a great hindrance to the carrying out of any schemes that have for their object the application of more of our own labour to our own soil. . . . The first to demonstrate by actual experiment that English soil could be made to double or quadruple its produce, would earn the name of a new Columbus, in that he had discovered another America at our own doors."

What it says of rents is right, and cannot be more tersely or clearly expressed. What it says of ground-produce is only partially right. To discover another America at our own doors would not be any advantage to us ;—nor even to make England bigger. We have no business to want England to be bigger, any more than the world to be bigger. The question is not, for *us*, how much land God ought to have given us ; but to fill the land He *has* given us, with the wisest and best inhabitants we can. I could give a plan, if I chose, with great ease, for the maintenance of a greatly increased quantity of inhabitants, on iron scaffolding, by pulverizing our mountains, and strewing the duly pulverized and, by wise medical geology, drugged, materials, over the upper stages ; carrying on our present ingenious manufactures in the dark lower stories. But the arrangement, even if it could be at once achieved, would be of no advantage to England.

Whereas St. George's arrangements, which are to take the hills, streams, and fields that God has made for us ; to keep them as lovely, pure, and orderly as we can ; to gather their carefully cultivated fruit in due season ; and if our children then

multiply so that we cannot feed them, to seek other lands to cultivate in like manner,—these arrangements, I repeat, will be found very advantageous indeed, as they always have been, wheresoever even in any minor degree enforced. In some happy countries they have been so, many a long year already; and the following letter from a recent traveller in one of them, may further illustrate the description given in a *Fors* of early date, of the felicity verily and visibly to be secured by their practice.

“SALZBURG, *July 30, 1876.*

“DEAR PROFESSOR RUSKIN,—I have long intended to write to you, but the mountain of matters I had to tell you has increased till Pelion is piled upon Ossa within my mind, and so I must confine myself to one or two points. In the Black Forest, and more especially in remote mountain valleys of Tyrol, I have found the people living more or less according to principles laid down for the Company of St. George. I have seen the rules so much decried, and even ridiculed, in England, wrought into the whole life of the people. One may still find villages and communes where lawsuits are impossible—a head-man of their own deciding all disputes; where the simplest honesty and friendliness are all but universal, and the stranger is taken in only in the better sense of the phrase; where the nearest approach to steam power is the avalanche of early summer; where there are no wheeled vehicles, and all burthens are carried on the backs of men and mules,”

(my dear friend, I really don't want people to do without donkey-carts, or pony-chaises; nay, I was entirely

delighted at Dolgelly, the other day, to meet a four-in-hand coach—driven by the coachman's daughter;)

“where rich and poor must fare alike on the simple food and cheap but sound wine of the country; where the men still carve wood, and the women spin and weave, during the long hours of winter; and where the folk still take genuine delight in picturesque dress, and daily church-going, and have not reduced both to the dreary felon's uniform of English respectability. With these unconscious followers of Ruskin, and Companions of St George, I formed deep friendships; and for me, if I ever revisit the wild recesses of the C  tzthal, it will almost be like going amongst my own people and to my own home. Indeed, wherever I left the beaten track of tourists, and the further I left it, so did the friendliness of my entertainers increase. It was evident they regarded me not as a mere purse-bearing animal, but as an argosy of quite a different sort—a human spirit coming from afar, from a land ‘belonging,’ as one of them conjectured, ‘to Spain,’ and laden with all kinds of new knowledge and strange ideas, of which they would gladly have some share. And so towards the close of a dinner, or supper, the meek-eyed hostess would come and sit beside me, hoping I had enjoyed a ‘happy meal;’ and after a complimentary sip from my glass, ask me all sorts of delightful and simple questions about myself, and my family, and my country. Or the landlord would come sometimes,—alas, at the very beginning of a meal,—and from huge pipe bowl, wonderfully painted with Crucifixion or Madonna, blow clouds of anything but incense smoke. But the intention of honouring and amusing me was none the less apparent.”

With my friend's pleasant days among this wise and happy people, I will forthwith compare the very unpleasant day I spent myself on my journey to Barmouth, among unwise and wretched ones; one incident occurring in it being of extreme significance. I had driven from Brantwood in early morning down the valley of the Crake, and took train first at the Ulverston station, settling myself in the corner of a carriage next the sea, for better prospect thereof. In the other corner was a respectable, stolid, middle-aged man reading his paper.

I had left my Coniston lake in dashing ripples under a south wind, thick with rain; but the tide lay smooth and silent along the sands; melancholy in absolute pause of motion, nor ebb nor flow distinguishable;—here and there, among the shelves of grey shore, a little ruffling of their apparent pools marked stray threadings of river-current.

At Grange, talking loud, got in two young coxcombs; who reclined themselves on the opposite cushions. One had a thin stick, with which, in a kind of St. Vitus's dance, partly affectation of nonchalance, partly real fever produced by the intolerable idleness of his mind and body, he rapped on the elbow of his seat, poked at the button-holes of the window strap, and switched his boots, or the air, all the way from Grange to the last station before Carnforth,—he and his friend talking yacht and regatta, listlessly;—the St. Vitus's, meantime, dancing one expressing his opinion that "the most dangerous thing to do on these lakes was going

before the wind." The respectable man went on reading his paper, without notice of them. None of the three ever looked out of the windows at sea or shore. There was not much to look at, indeed, through the driving, and gradually closer-driven, rain,—except the drifting about of the sea-gulls, and their quiet dropping into the pools, their wings kept open for an instant till their breasts felt the water well; then closing their petals of white light like suddenly shut water flowers.

The two regatta men got out, in drenching rain, on the coverless platform at the station before Carnforth, and all the rest of us at Carnforth itself, to wait for the up train. The shed on the up-line side, even there, is small, in which a crowd of third-class passengers were packed close by the outside drip. I did not see one, out of some twenty-five or thirty persons, tidily dressed, nor one with a contented and serenely patient look. Lines of care, of mean hardship, of comfortless submission, of gnawing anxiety, or ill-temper, characterized every face.

The train came up, and my poor companions were shuffled into it speedily, in heaps. I found an empty first-class carriage for myself: wondering how long universal suffrage would allow itself to be packed away in heaps, for my convenience.

At Lancaster, a father and daughter got in; presumably commercial. Father stoutly built and firm-featured, sagacious and cool. The girl hard and common; well dressed, except that her hat was cocked too high on her hair. They both read

papers all the way to Warrington. I was not myself employed much better; the incessant rain making the windows a mere wilderness of dirty dribblings; and neither Preston nor Wigan presenting anything lively to behold, I had settled myself to Mrs. Brown on Spelling Bees, (an unusually forced and poor number of Mrs. Brown, by the way).

I had to change at Warrington for Chester. The weather bettered a little, while I got a cup of tea and slice of bread in a small refreshment room; contemplating, the while, in front of me, the panels of painted glass on its swinging doors, which represented two troubadours, in broadly striped blue and yellow breeches, purple jackets, and plumed caps; with golden-hilted swords, and enormous lyres. Both had soft curled moustaches, languishing eyes, open mouths, and faultless legs. Meanwhile, lounged at the counter behind me, much bemused in beer, a perfect example of the special type of youthful blackguard now developing generally in England; more or less blackly pulpous and swollen, in all the features, and with mingled expression of intense grossness and intense impudence,—half pig, half jackdaw.

There got in with me, when the train was ready, a middle-class person of commercial-traveller aspect, who had possessed himself of a *Graphic* from the newsboy; and whom I presently forgot, in examining the country on a line new to me, which became quickly, under gleams of broken sunlight, of extreme interest. Azure-green fields of deep corn;

undulations of sandstone hill, with here and there a broken crag at the edge of a cutting; presently the far glittering of the Solway-like sands of Dee, and rounded waves of the Welsh hills on the southern horizon, formed a landscape more fresh and fair than I have seen for many a day, from any great line of English rail. When I looked back to my fellow-traveller, he was sprawling all his length on the cushion of the back seat, with his boots on his *Graphic*,—not to save the cushions assuredly, but in the foul modern carelessness of everything which we have ‘done with’ for the moment;—his face clouded with sullen thought, as of a person helplessly in difficulty, and not able to give up thinking how to avoid the unavoidable.

In a minute or two more I found myself plunged into the general dissolution and whirlpool of porters, passengers, and crook-boned trucks, running round corners against one’s legs, of the great Chester station. A simply-dressed upper-class girl of sixteen or seventeen, strictly and swiftly piloting her little sister through the populace, was the first human creature I had yet seen, on whom sight could rest without pain. The rest of the crowd was a mere dismal fermentation of the Ignominious.

The train to Ruabon was crowded, and I was obliged to get into a carriage with two cadaverous sexagenarian spinsters, who had been keeping the windows up, all but a chink, for fear a drop of rain or breath of south wind should come in, and were breathing the richest compound of products of their

own indigestion. Pretending to be anxious about the construction of the train, I got the farther window down, and my body well out of it; then put it only half-way up when the train left, and kept putting my head out without my hat; so as, if possible, to impress my fellow-passengers with the imminence of a collision, which could only be averted by extreme watchfulness on my part. Then requesting, with all the politeness I could muster, to be allowed to move a box with which they had occupied the corner-seat—"that I might sit face to the air"—I got them ashamed to ask that the window might be shut up again; but they huddled away into the opposite corner to make me understand how they suffered from the draught. Presently they got out two bags of blue grapes, and ate away unanimously, availing themselves of my open window to throw out rolled-up pips and skins.

General change, to my extreme relief, as to their's, was again required at Ruabon, effected by a screwing backwards and forwards, for three-quarters of an hour, of carriages which one was expecting every five minutes to get into; and which were puffed and pushed away again the moment one opened a door, with loud calls of 'Stand back there.' A group of half a dozen children, from eight to fourteen—the girls all in straw hats, with long hanging scarlet ribands—were more or less pleasant to see meanwhile; and sunshine, through the puffs of petulant and cross-purposed steam, promised a pleasant run to Llangollen.

I had only the conventional 'business man with a paper' for this run; and on his leaving the carriage at Llangollen, was just closing the door, thinking to have both windows at command, when my hand was stayed by the father of a family of four children, who, with their mother and aunt, presently filled the carriage, the children fitting or scrambling in anywhere, with expansive kicks and lively struggles. They belonged to the lower middle-class; the mother an ideal of the worthy commonplace, evidently hard put to it to make both ends meet, and wholly occupied in family concerns; her face fixed in the ignoble gravity of virtuous persons to whom their own troublesome households have become monasteries. The father, slightly more conscious of external things, submitting benevolently to his domestic happiness out on its annual holiday. The children ugly, fidgety, and ill-bred, but not unintelligent,—full of questionings, 'when' they were to get here, or there? how many rails there were on the line; which side the station was on, and who was to meet them. In such debate, varied by bodily contortions in every direction, they contrived to pass the half-hour which took us through the vale of Llangollen, past some of the loveliest brook and glen scenery in the world. But neither the man, the woman, nor any one of the children, looked out of the window once, the whole way.

They got out at Corwen, leaving me to myself for the run past Bala lake and down the Dolgelly valley; but more sorrowful than of late has been

my wont, in the sense of my total isolation from the thoughts and ways of the present English people. For I was perfectly certain that among all the crowd of living creatures whom I had that day seen,—scarlet ribands and all,—there was not one to whom I could have spoken a word on any subject interesting to me, which would have been intelligible to them.

But the first broad sum of fact, for the sake of which I have given this diary, is that among certainly not less than some seven or eight hundred people, seen by me in the course of this day, I saw not one happy face, and several hundreds of entirely miserable ones. The second broad sum of fact is, that out of the few,—not happy,—but more or less spirited and complacent faces I saw, among the lower and the mercantile classes, what life or spirit they had depended on a peculiar cock-on-a-dunghill character of impudence, which meant a total inability to conceive any good or lovely thing in this world or any other: and the third sum of fact is, that in this rich England I saw only eight out of eight hundred persons gracefully dressed, and decently mannered. But the particular sign, and prophetic vision of the day, to me, was the man lying with his boots on his *Graphic*. There is a long article in the *Monetary Gazette*, sent me this morning, on the folly of the modern theory that the nation is suffering from 'over-production.' The writer is quite correct in his condemnation of the fallacy in question; but it has not occurred to him, nor to

any other writer that I know of on such matters, to consider whether we may not possibly be suffering from over-*destruction*. If you use a given quantity of steam power and human ingenuity to produce your *Graphic* in the morning, and travel from Warrington to Chester with your boots upon it in the afternoon,—Is the net result, production, my dear editor? The net result is labour with weariness A.M.,—idleness with disgust P.M.,—and nothing to eat next day. And do not think our Warrington friend other than a true type of your modern British employer of industry. The universal British public has no idea of any other use of art, or industry, than he! It reclines everlastingly with its boots on its *Graphic*. ‘To-morrow there will be another,—what use is there in the old?’ Think of the quantity of energy used in the ‘production’ of the daily works of the British press! The first necessity of our lives in the morning,—old rags in the evening! Or the annual works of the British naval architect? The arrow of the Lord’s deliverance in January, and old iron in June! The annual industry of the European soldier,—of the European swindler,—of the European orator,—will you tell me, good Mr. Editor, what it is that they produce? Will you calculate for me, how much of all that *is*, they destroy?

But even of what we do produce, under some colour or fancy, of service to humanity,—How much of it *is* of any service to humanity, good Mr. Editor? Here is a little bit of a note bearing on the matter,

written last Christmas in a fit of uncontrollable provocation at a Christian correspondent's drawl of the popular sentiment, "living is so very expensive, you know!"

Why, of course it is, living as you do, in a saucepan full of steam, with no potatoes in it!

Here is the first economical fact I have been trying to teach, these fifteen years; and can't get it, yet, into the desperate, leathern-skinned, death-helmeted skull of this wretched England—till Jael-Atropos drive it down, through skull and all, into the ground;—that you can't have bread without corn, nor milk without kine; and that being dragged about the country behind kettles won't grow corn on it; and speculating in stocks won't feed mutton on it; and manufacturing steel pens, and scrawling lies with them, won't clothe your backs or fill your bellies, though you scrawl England as black with ink as you have strewed her black with cinders.

Now look here: I am writing in a friend's house in a lovely bit of pasture country, surrounding what was once a bright bit of purple and golden heath—inlaid as gorse and heather chose to divide their possession of it; and is now a dusty wilderness of unlet fashionable villas, bricks, thistles, and crockery. My friend has a good estate, and lets a large farm; but he can't have cream to his tea, and has 'Dorset' butter.* If he ever gets any of these

* Most London theatre-goers will recollect the Butterman's pity for his son, in "Our Boys," as he examines the remains of the breakfast in their lodgings.

articles off his own farm, they are brought to him from London, having been carried there that they may pay toll to the railroad company, once as they go up, and again as they come down; and have two chances of helping to smash an excursion train.

Meantime, at the apothecary's shop in the village, I can buy, besides drugs,—cigars, and stationery; and among other stationery, the 'College card,' of "eighteen *useful* articles,"—namely, Bohemian glass ruler, Bohemian glass penholder, pen-box with gilt and diapered lid, pen-wiper with a gilt tin fern leaf for ornament, pencil, india-rubber, and twelve steel pens,—all stitched separately and neatly on the card; and the whole array of them to be bought for sixpence.

What times!—what civilization!—what ingenuity!—what cheapness!

Yes; but what does it mean? First, that I, who buy the card, can't get cream to my tea! And secondly, that the unhappy wretches,—Bohemian and other,—glass blowers, iron diggers, pen manufacturers, and the like,—who have made the eighteen useful articles, have sixpence to divide among them for their trouble! What sort of cream have *they* to their tea?

But the question of questions about it all, is—Are these eighteen articles 'useful articles'? For what? Here's a—nominal—'pencil' on our 'College card.' But not a collegian, that I know of, wants to draw,—and if he did, he couldn't draw with *this* thing, which is *not* a pencil, but some sand and

coal-dust jammed in a stick. The 'india-rubber' also, I perceive, is not india-rubber; but a composition for tearing up the surface of paper,—useful only to filthy blunderers; the nasty glass-handled things, which will break if I drop them, and cut the housemaid's fingers, I shall instantly turn out of the house; the pens, for which I bought the card, will perhaps be useful to me, because I have, to my much misery, writing to do; but *you*, happier animals, who may exist without scratching either paper or your heads,—what is the use of them to *you*? (N.B. I couldn't write a word with one of them, after all.)

I must go back to my Warrington friend; for there are more lessons to be received from him. I looked at him, in one sense, not undifferentially. He was, to the extent of his experience, as good a judge of art as I. He knew what his *Graphic* was worth. Pronounced an entirely divine verdict upon it. Put it, beneficently, out of its pictorial pain,—for ever.

Do not think that it is so difficult to know good art from bad. The poorest-minded public cannot rest in its bad possessions,—wants them new, and ever new. I have given my readers, who have trusted me, four art-possessiones, which I do not fear their wishing to destroy; and it will be a long while before I wish them to get another. I have too long delayed beginning to tell them *why* they are good; and one of my Sheffield men asked Mr. Swan the other day what I had commended the *Leucothea* for,—“he couldn't see anything in it.”

To whom the first answer must be—Did you expect to, then? My good manufacturing friend, be assured there was no more thought of pleasing *you* when Leucotheca was carved, than of pleasing—Ganymede, when Rosalind was christened. Some day you will come to “like her name.”

But, whether you ever come to ‘see anything in it’ or not, be assured that this, and the Lippi, and the Titian, and the Velasquez, are, all four, alike in one quality, which you can respect, even if you do not envy. They are work of men doing their best. And whose *pride* is in doing their best and most. You modern British workmen’s pride, I find more and more, is in doing ingeniously the worst, and least, you can.

Again: they all four agree in being the work of men trained under true masters, and themselves able to be true masters to others. They belong, therefore, to what are properly called ‘schools of art.’ Whereas your modern British workman recognizes no master; but is, (as the result of his increasing intelligence, according to Mr. Mill,) less and less disposed “to be guided in the way which he should go by any prestige or authority.” The result of which is that every British artist has to find out how to paint as he best can; and usually begins to see his way to it, by the time he is sixty.

Thirdly. They belong to schools which, orderly and obedient themselves, understood the law of order in all things. Which is the chief distinction between Art and Rudeness. And the first aim of

every great painter, is to express clearly his obedience to the law of Kosmos, Order, or Symmetry.* The only *perfect* work of the four I have given, the Titian, binds itself by this symmetry most severely. Absolutely straight lines of screen behind the Madonna's head,—a dark head on one side, a dark head on the other; a child on one side, a child on the other; a veil falling one way on one side, a scroll curling the other way on the other; a group of leaves in the child's right hand balanced by another in the Madonna's left; two opposed sprays of leaves on the table, and the whole clasped by a single cherry. In the Lippi, the symmetry is lateral; the Madonna fronting the group of the child central, with supporting angel on each side. In the Leucothea, the diminishing magnitudes of the attendant goddesses on the right are answered by the diminishing magnitudes from the seated goddess and the child, to the smallest figure at her knee, which clasps both the sides of the chain.

Lastly, in the Velasquez, the little pyramid of a child, with her three tassels and central brooch, and a chair on each side of her, would have been *too* symmetrical, but for the interferent light in the dog.

I said just now, the Titian was the only *perfect* one of the four. Everything there is done with

* The law of symmetry, however, rests on deeper foundations than that of mere order. It is here, in Greek terms, too subtle to be translated except bit by bit, as we want them.

Τίς οὖν δὴ πρᾶξις φίλη καὶ ἀκόλουθος θεῷ; μία, καὶ ἓνα λόγον ἔχουσα ἀρχαίων, ὅτι τῷ μὲν ὁμοίῳ τὸ ὅμοιον ὄντι μετρίῳ φίλον ἂν εἴη, τὰ δ' ἀμετρα οὐτ' ἀλλήλοις οὔτε τοῖς ἐμμέτροις.—(Plato, Laws, Book IV.)

absolute rightness; and you don't see how. The hair in the Lippi is too stiff,—in the Velasquez, too slight; and one sees that it is drawn in the one, dashed in the other; but by Titian only, 'painted'—you don't know how.

I say the Titian is the most perfect. It does not follow that it is the best. There are gifts shown in the others, and feelings, which are not in it; and of which the relative worth may be matter of question. For instance, the Lippi, as I told you before, is a painting wrought in real Religion;—that is to say, in the binding of the heart in obedience to the conceived nature and laws of God.

The Titian is wrought in what Mr. Harrison calls the Religion of Humanity: but ought more accurately to call, the Religion of Manity, (for the English use of the word 'humane' is continually making him confuse benevolence with religion,)—that is to say, in the binding of the heart in obedience to the nature and laws of Man.

And, finally, the Velasquez is wrought in the still more developed Modern Religion of Dogity, or obedience of the heart to the nature and laws of Dog; (the lovely little idol, you observe, dominant on velvet throne, as formerly the Madonna). Of which religion, as faithfully held by the brave British Squire, in its widest Catholic form of horse-and-dog-ity, and passionately and tenderly indulged by the devoted British matron in the sectarian limitation of Lapdogity,—there is more to be told than Velasquez taught, or than we can learn, to-day.

LETTER LXX

PROPERTY TO WHOM PROPER

I HAVE been not a little pestered this month by the quantities of letters, which I can't wholly cure myself of the weakness of reading, from people who fancy that, like other political writers of the day, I print, on the most important subjects, the first thing that comes into my head ; and may be made immediately to repent of what I have said, and generally to see the error of my ways, by the suggestions of their better judgment.

Letters of this sort do not surprise me if they have a Scottish postmark, the air of Edinburgh having always had a curiously exciting quality, and amazing power over weak heads ; but one or two communications from modest and thoughtful English friends have seriously troubled me by the extreme simplicity of their objections to statements which, if not acceptable, I had at least hoped would have been intelligible to them.

I had, indeed, expected difficulty in proving to my readers the mischievousness of Usury ; but I never thought to find confusion in their minds between Property itself, and its Interest. Yet I find this singular confusion at the root of the

objections made by most of my cavilling correspondents: "How *are* we to live" (they say) "if, when we have saved a hundred pounds, we can't make a hundred and five of them, without any more trouble?"

Gentlemen and ladies all,—you are to live on your hundred pounds, saved; and if you want five pounds more, you must go and work for five pounds more; just as a man who hasn't a hundred pounds must work for the first five he gets.

The following sentence, written by a man of real economical knowledge, expresses, with more than usual precision, the common mistake: "I much fear if your definition of Usury be correct, which is to the effect that it is a sin to derive money from the possession of capital, or otherwise than by our own personal work. Should we follow this proposition to its final logical conclusion, we must preach communism pure and simple, and contend that property is theft,—which God forbid."

To this correspondent I answered briefly, "Is my house not my property unless I let it for lodgings, or my wife not my property unless I prostitute her?"

But I believe it will be well, though I intended to enter on other matters this month, to repeat instead once more, in the shortest and strongest terms I can find, what I have now stated at least a hundred times respecting the eternal nature and sanctity of 'Property.'

A man's 'Property,' the possession 'proper' to

him—his own, rightly so called, and no one else's on any pretence of their's—consists of,

A, The good things,

B, Which he has honestly got,

C, And can skilfully use.

That is the A B C of Property.

A. It must consist of good things—not bad ones. It is rightly called therefore a man's 'Goods,' not a man's 'Bads.'

If you have got a quantity of dung lodged in your drains, a quantity of fleas lodged in your bed, or a quantity of nonsense lodged in your brains,—that is not 'Property,' but the reverse thereof; the value to you of your drains, bed, and brains being thereby diminished, not increased.

Can you understand *that* much, my practical friend? *

B. It must be a good thing, honestly got. Nothing that you have stolen or taken by force, nor anything that your fathers stole or took by force, is your property. Nevertheless, the benignant law of Nature concerning any such holding, has always been quite manifestly that you may keep it—if you can,—so only that you acknowledge that and none other to be the condition of tenure. †

* I suppose myself, in the rest of this letter, to be addressing a "business man of the nineteenth century."

† Thus, in the earlier numbers of *Fors*, I have observed more than once, to the present landholders of England, that they may keep their lands—if they can! Only let them understand that trial will soon be made, by the Laws of Nature, of such capacity in them.

Can you understand that much more, my practical friend ?

C. It must be not only something good, and not only something honestly got, but also something you can skilfully use.

For, as the old proverb, "You can't eat your pudding and have it," is utterly true in its bearing against Usury,—so also this reverse of it is true in confirmation of property—that you can't 'have' your pudding unless you *can* eat it. It may be composed for you of the finest plums, and paid for wholly out of your own pocket; but if you can't stomach it—the pudding is not for *you*. Buy the finest horse on four legs, he is not 'proper' to you if you can't ride him. Buy the best book between boards,—Horace, or Homer, or Dante,—and if you don't know Latin, nor Greek, nor Christianity, the paper and boards are yours indeed, but the books—by no means.

You doubt this, my practical friend ?

Try a child with a stick of barley-sugar;—tell him it is his, but he mustn't eat it; his face will express to you the fallaciousness of that principle of property in an unmistakable manner. But by the time he grows as old and stupid as you, perhaps he will buy barley-sugar that he can't taste, to please the public.

"I've no pleasure in that picture of Holman Hunt's," said a highly practical man of business to a friend of mine the other day, "nor my wife neither, for that matter; but I always buy under good

advice as to market value ; and one's collection isn't complete without one."

I am very doubtful, my stupid practical friend, whether you have wit enough to understand a word more of what I have got to say this month. However, I must say it on the chance. And don't think I am talking sentiment or metaphysics to you. This is the practicallest piece of lessoning you ever had in your days, if you can but make it out ;—that you can only possess wealth according to your own capacity of it. An ape can only have wealth of nuts, and a dog of bones,* an earth-worm of earth, a charnel-worm of flesh, a West-end harlot of silk and champagne, an East-end harlot of gauze and gin, a modern average fine lady of such meat and drink, dress, jewels, and furniture, as the vile tradesmen of the day can provide, being limited even in the enjoyment of these,—for the greater part of what she calls 'hers,' she wears or keeps, either for the pleasure of others, if she is good, or for their mortification, if she is wicked,—but assuredly not for herself. When I buy a missal, or a picture, I buy it for myself, and expect everybody to say to me, What a selfish brute you are ! But when a lady walks about town with three or four yards of silk tied in a bundle behind her, she doesn't see it

* A *masterless* dog, I should have written, but wanted to keep my sentence short and down to my practical friend's capacity. For if the dog have the good fortune to find a master, he has a possession thenceforth, better than bones ; and which, indeed, he will, at any moment, leave, not his meat only, but his life for.

herself, or benefit by it herself: she carries it for the benefit of beholders. When she has put all her diamonds on in the evening, tell her to stay at home and enjoy them in radiant solitude; and the child, with his forbidden barley-sugar, will not look more blank. She carries her caparison either for the pleasure or for the mortification of society; and can no more enjoy its brilliancy by herself than a chandelier can enjoy having its gas lighted.

We must leave out of the question, for the moment, the element of benevolence which may be latent in toilette*; for the main economical result of the action of the great law that we can only have wealth according to our capacity, in modern Europe at this hour, is that the greater part of its so-called wealth is composed of things suited to the capacity of harlots and their keepers,—(including in the general term harlot, or daughter of Babylon, both the unmarried ones, and the married ones who have sold themselves for money,)—as of watches, time-pieces, tapestries, china, and any kind of pictures or toys good for bedrooms and boudoirs; but that, of any wealth which harlots and keepers of harlots have no mind to, Europe at present takes no cognizance whatsoever.

Now, what the difference may be in the quality of property which honest and dishonest women like is—for you, my practical friend—quite an unfathomable question; but you can at least

* It is a very subtle and lovely one, not to be discussed hurriedly.

understand that all the china, timepieces, and lewd pictures, which form the main 'property' of Paris and her imitators, are verily, in the *commercial* sense of the word, property; and would be estimated as such by any Jew in any bankruptcy court; yet the harlots don't lend their china or timepieces, on usury, nor make an income out of their bed-hangings,—do they? So that you see it is perfectly possible to have property, and a very costly quantity of it, without making any profit of such capital?

But the harlots have another kind of capital which you, my blind practical friend, don't call 'Property'; but which I, having the use of my eyes as well as of my hands, do. They have beauty of body;—many of them, also, wit of mind. And on these two articles of property, you observe, my friend, being much *more* their own, and much more valuable things, if they knew it, than china and timepieces—on these they do make an annual income, and turn them over, as you call it, several times perhaps in the year.

Now, if beauty of body and wit of tongue can be thus made sources of income, you will rank them perhaps, even as I do, among articles of wealth.

But, in old usury, there was yet another kind of treasure held account of—namely, Beauty of Heart, and Wit of Brains;—or what was shortly called by the Greek usurers, Psyche—(you may have heard the word before, my practical friend; but I do not expect you to follow me further). And this Psyche,

or Soul, was held by the two great old masters of economy—that is to say, by Plato and David—the best property of all that a man had; except only one thing, which the soul itself must be starved without, yet which you would never guess, my practical friend, if you guessed yourself into your grave, to be an article of property at all! The Law of God, of which David says, “*My soul fainteth* for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments,” or in terms which you can perhaps better understand, “The law of thy mouth is dearer unto me than thousands of gold and silver.”

But indeed the market value of this commodity has greatly fallen in these times. “Damn the Laws of God,” answered a City merchant of standing to a personal friend of mine, who was advising him the other day to take a little of that capital into his business.

Then, finally, there is just one article of property more to be catalogued, and I have done. The Lawgiver Himself, namely; the Master of masters, whom when, as human dogs, we discover, and can call our own Master, we are thenceforth ready to die for, if need be. Which Mr. Harrison and the other English gentlemen who are at present discussing, in various magazines, the meaning of the word ‘religion’* (appearing never to have heard in the course of their education, of either the word ‘licitor’

* See ‘definition’ quoted as satisfactory in *Anthropological Magazine*, “the belief in spiritual beings,” which would make the devil a religious person, inasmuch as he both believes—and fears.

or 'ligature'), will find, is, was, and will be, among all educated scholars, the perfectly simple meaning of that ancient word; and that there can be no such thing, even for sentimental Mr. Harrison, as a religion of Manity, nor for the most orthodox hunting parson, as a religion of Dogity; nor for modern European civilization as a religion of Bitchity, without such submission of spirit to the worshipped Power as shall in the most literal sense 'bind' and chain us to it for ever.

And now, to make all matters as clear as may be, I will put down in the manner of a Dutch auction—proceeding to the lower valuation,—the articles of property, rightly so called, which belong to any human creature.

I. The Master, or Father, in the old Latin phrase, '*Pater Noster*'; of whom David wrote, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee"; but this possession includes, in Plato's catalogue, the attendant spirits, "θεοὺς, ὄντας δεσπότας, καὶ τοὺς τούτοις ἐπομένους"—"the Gods, being Masters, and those next to them," specially signified in another place as "the Gods and the Angels, and the Heroes, and the Spirits of our Home, and our Ancestors."

II. The Law or Word of God, which the Bible Society professes to furnish for eighteenpence. But which, indeed, as often heretofore stated in *Fors Clavigera*, is by no means to be had at that low figure: the whole long hundred-and-nineteenth Psalm being little more than one agonizing prayer

for the gift of it; and a man's life well spent if he has truly received and learned to read ever so little a part of it.

III. The Psyche, in its sanity, and beauty (of which, when I have finished my inventory, I will give Plato's estimate in his own words). Some curious practical results have followed from the denial of its existence by modern philosophers; for the true and divine distinction between 'genera' of animals, and quite the principal 'origin of species' in them, is in their Psyche: but modern naturalists, not being able to vivisect the Psyche, have on the whole resolved that animals are to be classed by their bones; and whereas, for instance, by divine distinction of Psyche, the Dog and Wolf are precisely opposite creatures in their function to the sheepfold; and, spiritually, the Dominican, or Dog of the Lord, is for ever in like manner opposed to the Wolf of the Devil, modern science, finding Dog and Wolf indistinguishable in their Bones, declares them to be virtually one and the same animal.*

IV. The Body, in its sanity† and beauty: strength

* See the last results of modern enlightenment on this subject in Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins's directions for the scientific representation of Dogs, illustrated by the charming drawings of that great artist;—especially compare the learned outlines of head and paw in Plate II., and the delineation of head without Psyche in Plate III., with the ignorant efforts of Velasquez in such extremities and features in our fourth photograph. Perhaps Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins will have the goodness, in his next edition, to show us how Velasquez ought to have expressed the Scapholinear, Cuneiform, Pisiform, Trapezium, Trapezoid, Magnum, and Unciform bones in those miserably drawn fore-paws.

of it being the first simple meaning of what the Greeks called virtue ; and the eternity of it being the special doctrine of the form of religion professed in Christendom under the name of Christianity.

V. The things good and pleasing to the Psyche : as the visible things of creation, — sky, water, flowers, and the like ; and the treasured-up words or feats of other Spirits.

VI. The things good and pleasing to the Body : summed under the two heads of Bread and Wine, brought forth by the Amorite King of Salem.

VII. The documents giving claim to the possession of these things, when not in actual possession ; or ‘ money.’

This catalogue will be found virtually to include all the articles of wealth which men can either possess or lend, (for the fourth, fully understood, means the entire treasure of domestic and social affection ;) and the law of their tenure is that a man shall neither sell nor lend that which is indeed his *own*; neither his God, his conscience, his soul, his body, or his wife’s ; his country, his house, nor his tools. But that things which are not ‘ his own,’ but over which he has charge or authority, (as of more land than he can plough, or more books than he can read,) these he is bound to lend or give, as he sees they may be made serviceable to others ; and not for further gain to himself. Thus his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury is, under penalties, bound to make his very excellent library at Lambeth serviceable to other scholars ; but it is

not at all permitted to his Grace, by the laws of God, to use any part of the income derived from his pretty estate on the slope of the Addington Hills, for the purchase of books, by the loan of which, in the manner of Mr. Mudie, to the ignorant inhabitants of the village of Croydon, his Grace may at once add to his income (not more than) five per cent. on the capital thus laid out in literature; and to his dignity as a Christian pastor. I know, as it happens, more about the heather than the rents of his Grace's estate at Addington; my father and I having taken much pleasure in its bloom, and the gleaming of blue-bells amongst it—when he, in broken health, sought any English ground that Scottish flowers grew on, and I was but a child;—so that I thought it would please him to be laid in his last rest at the feet of those brown hills. And thus, as I say, I know somewhat of their flowers, but never inquired into their rents; and perhaps, as I rather hope, the sweet wood and garden ground serve only for his Grace's entertainment—not emolument: but even if only so, in these hard times his Grace must permit me to observe that he has quite as much earthly ground and lodging as any angel of the Lord can be supposed to require; and is under no necessity of adding to his possessions by the practice of usury. I do not know if the Archbishop has in his library the works of Mr. Thackeray; but he probably has sometimes relieved his studies of the Christian Fathers with modern literature, and may remember a figure of an amiable

and economical little school-boy who begins life by lending three halfpence, early in the week, to the boys who had outrun their income, for four halfpence at the week's end. The figure of the same little boy grown into an Archbishop, and making a few pence extra on his episcopal income by the loan of his old school-books, did not, it appears, suggest itself to the lamented author; but here it is, in relief, for us:—

EAST SURREY HALL, MUSEUM AND
LIBRARY COMPANY
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HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

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THE HIGH BAILIFF OF THE BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK.

THE MAYOR OF REIGATE.

It is proposed to found at Croydon an Institution to be called the *East Surrey Hall, Museum and Library*. This Institution, to be placed in the largest town of Surrey, is intended for the benefit and use of the whole county.

The Hall will be adapted for public meetings of every description, and it is hoped that it will also be an ornament to the town.

In the Museum it is intended to form a collection of objects of historic, scientific, and artistic interest, particularly of such as may be found in the County of Surrey. The Museum will be free.

The Library will consist of standard works of reference, arranged in rooms suitably furnished for the purposes of reading and study. In addition to works on general literature, it is intended to place in this Library, Books, Maps, and everything of the like nature, tending to elucidate the History, Topography, etc., of the County of Surrey, and especially of the Parish of Croydon. In the Company's Memorandum of Association it is expressly stipulated that one department of this Library shall be Free.

Other parts of the building will be so arranged as to be suitable for occupation, or for letting as offices to Friendly Societies and other Public Bodies.

The Capital required to found this Institution will be raised by means of Donations and One Pound Shares.

The Donations will be applied to carrying out all or any of the above objects, according as the Donor may desire.

The Articles of Association provide that "no dividend shall be declared in any one year exceeding in amount £5 per cent. per annum upon the amount of the Capital of the Company for the time being called up. If, in any one year, the net earnings of the Company would allow of a dividend exceeding in amount the said dividend of £5 per cent. per annum being declared, the Directors shall employ the surplus earnings in improving the buildings of the Company, or in the purchase of additional stock or effects, or otherwise, for the benefit of the Company, as the Directors for the time being shall from time to time determine."

VENICE, 16th September, 1876

I am weary, this morning, with vainly trying to draw the Madonna-herb clustered on the capitals of St. Mark's porch; and mingling its fresh life with the marble acanthus leaves which saw Barbarossa receive the foot of the Primate of Christendom on his neck;—wondering within myself all the while, which did not further my painting, how far the existing Primate of Canterbury, in modestly declining to set his foot upon the lion and the adder, was bettering the temper of the third Alexander; and wondering yet more whether the appointment—as vice-defender of the Faith for Her Majesty—of Lord Lonsdale to be curator of Lancashire souls, in the number implied by the catalogue of livings in his patronage,* gave to the Lord of the Dales of Lune more of the character of the Pope, or the Lion?

What may be the real value of the Lancashire souls as a property in trust, we may, perhaps, as clearly gather from the following passage of Plato as from any Christian political economist.

“And now, whosoever has been content to hear me speaking of the Gods, and of our dear ancestors, let him yet hear me in this. For next to the Gods, of all his possessions his soul is the mightiest, being the most his own.

“And the nature of it is in all things twofold; the part that is stronger and better, ruling, and

* ‘Forty-three in number.’—*Carlisle Journal*, Aug. 18, 1876.

the part that is weaker and worse, serving; and the part of it that rules is always to be held in honour before that that serves. I command, therefore, every man that he should rightly honour his soul, calling it sacred, next to the Gods and the higher Powers attendant on them.

“And indeed, to speak simply, none of us honours his soul rightly, but thinks he does. For Honour is a divine good, nor can any evil thing bring it,* or receive; and he who thinks to magnify his soul by any gifts to it, or sayings, or submittings, which yet do not make it better from less good, seems indeed to himself to honour it, but does so in nowise.

“For example, the boy just become man thinks himself able to judge of all things; and thinks that he honours his own soul in praising it; and eagerly commits to its doing whatsoever it chooses to do.

“But, according to what has been just said, in doing this he injures and does not honour his soul, which, second to the Gods, he is bound to honour.

“Neither when a man holds himself not guilty of his own errors, nor the cause of the most and the greatest evils that befall him†; but holds others to

* I have no doubt of the mingled active sense of *τιμω* in this sentence, necessary by the context; while also the phrase would be a mere flat truism, if the word were used only in its ordinary passive meaning.

† To see clearly that whatever our fates may have been, the heaviest calamity of them—and, in a sort, the only real calamity—is our own causing, is the true humility which indeed we profess with our lips, when our heart is far from it.

be guilty of them, and himself guiltless, always ;—honouring his own soul, as it seems ; but far away is he from doing this, for he injures it ; neither when he indulges it with delights beyond the word and the praise of the Lawgiver* ;—then he in no-wise honours it, but disgraces, filling it with weaknesses and repentances ; neither when he does not toil through, and endure patiently, the contraries of these pleasures, the divinely praised Pains, and Fears, and Griefs, and Mournings, but yields under them ; then he does not honour it in yielding ; but, in doing all these things, accomplishes his soul in dishonour ; neither (even if living honourably)† when he thinks that life is wholly good, does he honour it, but shames it, then also weakly allowing his soul in the thought that all things in the invisible world are evil ; and not resisting it, nor teaching it that it does not know but that, so far from being evil, the things that belong to the Gods of that world may be for us the best of all things. Neither when we esteem beauty of body more than beauty of soul, for nothing born of the Earth is more honourable than what is born of Heaven ; and he who thinks so of his soul knows not that he is despising his marvellous possession : neither when one desires to obtain money in any dishonourable way, or having so

* Pleasures which the Word of God, or of the earthly Lawgiver speaking in His Name, does not allow, nor *praise* ; for all right pleasures it praises, and forbids sadness as a grievous sin.

† This parenthesis is in Plato's mind, visibly, though not in his words.

obtained it, is not indignant and unhappy therefore—does he honour his soul with gifts; far otherwise: he has given away the glory and honour of it for a spangle of gold; and all the gold that is on the earth, and under the earth, is not a price for virtue.”

That is as much of Plato's opinions concerning the Psyche as I can write out for you to-day; in next Fors, I may find you some parallel ones of Carpaccio's: meantime I have to correct a mistake in Fors,* which it will be great delight to all Amorites to discover; namely, that the Princess, whom I judged to be industrious because she went on working while she talked to her father about her marriage, cannot, on this ground, be praised beyond Princesses in general; for, indeed, the little mischief, instead of working, as I thought,—while her father is leaning his head on his hand in the greatest distress at the thought of parting with her,—is trying on her marriage ring!

* Vol. I. of this edition, p. 400.

LETTER LXXI

THE FEUDAL RANKS

VENICE, 4th October, 1876.

I AM able at last to give you some of the long-promised opinions of Carpaccio on practical subjects; not that, except ironically, I ever call them 'opinions.' There are certain men who *know* the truths necessary to human life; they do not 'opine' them; and nobody's 'opinions,' on any subject, are of any consequence opposed to them. Hesiod is one of these, Plato another, Dante another, Carpaccio is another. He speaks little, and among the inspired painters may be thought of as one of the lesser prophets; but his brief book is of extreme value.

I have been happy enough to get two of my faithful scholars to work upon it for me; and they have deciphered it nearly all—much more, at all events, than I can tell you either in this Fors, or in several to come.

His message is written in the Venetian manner, by painting the myths of the saints, in his own way.

If you will look into the introduction to the

'Queen of the Air,' you will find it explained that a great myth *can* only be written in the central time of a nation's power. This prophecy of Carpaccio's may be thought of by you as the sweetest, *because* the truest, of all that Venice was born to utter: the painted syllabbling of it is nearly the last work and word of hers in true life. She speaks it, and virtually, thereafter, dies, or begins to die.

It is written in a series of some eighteen to twenty pictures, chiefly representing the stories of St. Ursula, St. George, and St. Jerome.

The first, in thoughtful order, of these, the dream of St. Ursula, has been already partly described in Fors; (Vol. I., pp. 395-397). The authorities of the Venetian Academy have been kind enough to take the picture down and give it me to myself, in a quiet room, where I am making studies, which I hope will be of use in Oxford, and elsewhere.

But there is this to be noted before we begin; that of these three saints, whose stories Carpaccio tells, one is a quite real one, on whose penman's work we depend for our daily Bible-bread. Another, St. George, is a very dimly real one,—very disputable by American faith, and we owe to him, only in England, certain sentiments;—the Order of the Garter, and sundry sign-boards of the George and Dragon. Venice supposed herself to owe more to him; but he is nevertheless, in her mind also, a very ghostly saint,—armour and all too light to sink a gondola.

Of the third, St. Ursula, by no industry of my

good scholars, and none has been refused, can I find the slightest material trace. Under scholarly investigation, she vanishes utterly into the stars and the æther,—and literally, as you will hear, and see, into moonshine, and the modern German meaning of everything,—the Dawn.* Not a relic, not a word remains of her, as what Mr. John Stuart Mill calls “a utility embodied in a material object.”

The whole of her utility is Immaterial—to us in England, immaterial, of late years, in every conceivable sense. But the strange thing is that Carpaccio paints, of the substantial and indisputable saint, only three small pictures; of the disputable saint, three more important ones; but of the entirely aerial saint, a splendid series, the chief labour of his life.

The chief labour;—and chief rest, or play, it seems also: questionable in the extreme as to the temper of Faith in which it is done.

We will suppose, however, at first, for your better satisfaction, that in composing the pictures he no more believed there ever had been a Princess Ursula than Shakspeare, when he wrote *Midsummer Night's Dream*, believed there had been a Queen Hippolyta: and that Carpaccio had just as much

* The primary form in which the legend shows itself is a Nature myth, in which Ursula is the Bud of flowers, enclosed in its rough or hairy calyx, and her husband, Æther—the air of spring. She opens into lovely life with “eleven” thousand other flowers—their fading is their sudden martyrdom. And—says your modern philosopher—‘That’s all’!

faith in angels as Shakspeare in fairies—and no more. Both these artists, nevertheless, set themselves to paint, the one fairies, the other angels and saints, for popular—entertainment, (say your modern sages,) or popular—instruction, it may yet appear. But take it your own way; and let it be for popular amusement. This play, this picture which I am copying for you, were, both of them we will say, toys, for the English and Venetian people.

Well, the next question is, whether the English and Venetians, when they *could* be amused with these toys, were more foolish than now, when they can only be amused with steam merry-go-rounds.

Below St. George's land at Barmouth, large numbers of the English populace now go to bathe. Of the Venetians, beyond St. George's island, many go now to bathe on the sands of Lido. But nobody thinks of playing a play about queens and fairies, to the bathers on the Welsh beach. The modern intellectual teacher erects swings upon the beach. There the suspended population oscillate between sea and sky, and are amused. Similarly in Venice, no decorative painter at Lido thinks of painting pictures of St. Nicholas of the Lido, to amuse the modern Venetian. The white-necked orchestra plays them a 'pot-pourri,' and their steamer squeaks to them, and they are amused.

And so sufficiently amused, that I, hearing with sudden surprise and delight the voice of native Venetian Punch last night, from an English ship,

and instantly inquiring, with impatience, why I had not had the happiness of meeting him before, found that he was obliged to take refuge as a runaway, or exile, under the British Flag, being forbidden in his own Venice, for evermore—such the fiat of liberty towards the first Apostolic Vicar thereof.

I am willing, however, for my own part, to take Carpaccio a step farther down in the moral scale still. Suppose that he painted this picture, not even to amuse his public—but to amuse himself!

To a great extent I *know* that this is true. I know,—(you needn't ask how, because you can't be shown how,—but I *do* know, trust me,) that he painted this picture greatly to amuse himself, and had extreme delight in the doing of it; and if he did not actually believe that the princess and angels ever were, at least he heartily wished there had been such persons, and could be.

Now this is the first step to real faith. There may never have been saints: there may be no angels,—there may be no God. Professors Huxley and Tyndall are of opinion that there is no God: *they* have never found one in a bottle. Well: possibly there isn't; but, my good Sheffield friends, do you wish there was? or are you of the French Republican opinion—"If there were a God, we should have to shoot him" as the first great step towards the "abolition of caste" proposed by our American friends?

You will say, perhaps,—It is not a proper

intellectual state to approach such a question in, to wish anything about it. No, assuredly not,—and I have told you so myself, many a time. But it is an entirely proper state to fit you for being approached by the Spirits that you wish for, if there are such. And if there are not, it can do you no harm.

Nor, so long as you distinctly understand it to be a wish, will it warp your intellect. “Oh, if I had but Aladdin’s lamp, or Prince Houssain’s carpet!” thinks the rightly-minded child, reading its ‘Arabian Nights.’ But he does not take to rubbing his mother’s lamps, nor to squatting on scraps of carpet, hopefully.

Well—concerning these Arabian nights of Venice and the Catholic Church. Carpaccio thinks,—“Oh, if there had but been such a Princess as this—if there could but be! At least I can paint one, and delight myself in the image of her!”

Now, can you follow him so far as this? Do you really wish there were such a Princess? Do you so much as want any kind of Princess? Or are your aims fixed on the attainment of a world so constituted that there shall be no Princesses in it any more,—but only Helps in the kitchen, who shall “come upstairs to play the piano,” according to the more detailed views of *The American Socialist*?

I believe you can scarcely so much as propose this question to yourselves, not knowing clearly what a Princess is. For a Princess is truly one of the members of that Feudal System which, I hear on all

hands, is finally ended. If it be so, it is needful that I should explain to you specifically what the Feudal System was, before you can wish for a Princess, or any other part of it, back again.

The Feudal System begins in the existence of a Master, or Mister; and a Mistress,—or, as you call her, Missis,—who have deputed authority over a piece of land, hereditarily theirs; and absolute authority in their own house, or home, standing on such land: authority essentially dual, and not by any means admitting two masters, or two missises, still less our American friend's calculated desirable quantity of 150, mixed. And the office of a Master implies the office of Servants; and of a Mistress, the office of Maids. These are the first Four Chemical Elements of the Feudal System.

The next members of it in order of rank are the Master of the Masters, and Mistress of the Mistresses; of whom they hold their land in fee, and who are recognized still, in a sort, as landlord and landlady, though for the most part now degenerate into mere tax-gatherers; but, in their true office, the administrators of law concerning land, and magistrates, and hearers of appeal between household and household:* their duty involving perfect acquaintance and friendship with all the households under their rule; and their dominion, therefore, not by any possibility extending over very large space of territory,—what is commonly

* Compare the last page of Fors, October 1875 (pp. 190, 191, *ante*).
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called in England an 'estate' being usually of approximately convenient space.

The next members of the Feudal System in order of rank, are the Lord of the Landlords, and Lady of the Landladies; commonly called their Duke, Doge, or leader, and Duchess or Dogaressa: the authority of this fourth member of the Feudal System being to enforce law and hear appeal between Lord and Lord; and to consult with them respecting the harmonious government of their estates over such extent of land as may from some speciality of character be managed by common law referring to some united interest,—as, for instance, Cumberland, by a law having reference to pastoral life, Cornwall by laws involving the inspection of mines of tin, and the like,—these provinces, or shires, having each naturally a capital city, cathedral, town hall, and municipality of merchants.

As examples of which Fourth Order* in the Feudal System, the Dukes and Dukedoms of York, Lancaster, Venice, Milan, Florence, Orleans, and Burgundy, may be remembered by you as having taken very practical part in the government, or, it may be, misgovernment, of the former world.

Then the persons of the Fifth Order, in the Feudal System, are the Duke of the Dukes, and Duchess of the Duchesses, commonly called the King and Queen, having authority and magistracy

* I. Servant. II. Master. III. Lord. IV. Duke.

over the Dukes of the provinces, to the extent in which such provinces may be harmoniously joined in a country or kingdom, separated from other portions of the world by interests, manners, and dialect.

Then the Sixth Order in the Feudal System, much, of late years, misunderstood, and even forgotten, is that of the Commander or Emperor of the Kings; having the same authority and office of hearing appeal among the Kings of kingdoms, as they among the Dukes of provinces.

The systems of all human civilized governments resolve themselves finally into the balance of the Semitic and Iapetic powers under the anointed Cyrus of the East and Karl of the West.*

The practical power of the office has been necessarily lost since the Reformation; and in recent debates in an English Parliament on this subject, it appeared that neither the Prime Minister of England, nor any of her Parliamentary representatives, had the slightest notion of the meaning of the word.

The reason that the power of the office has been lost since the Reformation, is that all these temporal offices are only perfected, in the Feudal System, by their relative spiritual offices. Now, though the Squire and the Rector still in England occupy their proper symmetrical position, the equally balanced authority of the Duke and Bishop has been greatly

* I want to write a long note on Byzantine empire,—Commanders of the Faithful,—Grand Turks,—and the “Eastern question.” But can’t: and perhaps the reader will be thankful.

confused: that of the King and Cardinal was so even during the fully animated action of both; and all conception of that of the Emperor and Pope is of course dead in Protestant minds.

But there was yet, in the Feudal System, one Seventh and Final Authority, of which the imagination is like to be also lost to Protestant minds. That of the King of Kings, and Ruler of Empires; in whose ordinances and everlasting laws, and in 'feudom' or faith and covenant with whom, as the Giver of Land and Bread, all these subordinate powers lived, and moved, and had their being.

And truly if, since we cannot find this King of Kings in the most carefully digested residuum, we are sure that we cannot find Him anywhere; and if, since by no fineness of stopper we can secure His essence in a bottle, we are sure that we cannot stay Him anywhere, truly what I hear on all hands is correct; and the Feudal System, with all consequences and members thereof, is verily at an end.

In the meantime, however, you can now clearly understand the significance, in that system, of the word Princess, meaning a King's daughter, bred in such ways and knowledges as may fit her for dominion over nations. And thus you can enjoy, if otherwise in a humour for its enjoyment, the story of the Princess Ursula, here following,—though for the present you may be somewhat at a loss to discern the practical bearings of it; which, however, if you will note that the chief work of the Princess is to convert the savage minds of the 'English,' or people

of Over-sea, from the worship of their god 'Malcometto,' to the 'rule of St. John the Baptist,'—you may guess to be in some close connection with the proposed 'practice' of St. George's Company; not less, indeed, than the functions of Carpaccio's other two chiefly worshipped saints.

The legends of St. Ursula, which were followed by him, have been collated here at Venice, and reduced to this pleasant harmony, in true help to me, by my good scholar James Reddie Anderson. For whose spirit thus active with us, no less than for the spirit, at rest, of the monk who preserved the story for us, I am myself well inclined to say another Pater and Ave.

THE STORY OF ST. URSULA.*

There was once a just and most Christian King of Britain, called Maurus. To him and to his wife Daria was born a little girl, the fairest creature that this earth ever saw. She came into the world wrapped in a hairy mantle, and all men wondered greatly what this might mean. Then the King gathered together his wise men to inquire of them. But they could not make known the thing to him, for only God in Heaven knew how the rough robe signified that she should follow holiness and purity all her days, and the wisdom of St. John the Baptist. And because of the mantle, they called her 'Ursula,' 'Little Bear.'

* This Life of St. Ursula has been gathered from some of the stories concerning her which were current through Italy in the time of Carpaccio. The northern form of the legend, localized at Cologne, is neither so lovely nor so ancient.

Now Ursula grew day by day in grace and loveliness, and in such wisdom that all men marvelled. Yet should they not have marvelled, since with God all things are possible. And when she was fifteen years old she was a light of all wisdom, and a glass of all beauty, and a fountain of scripture and of sweet ways. Lovelier woman there was not alive. Her speech was so full of all delight that it seemed as though an angel of Paradise had taken human flesh. And in all the kingdom no weighty thing was done without counsel of Ursula.

So her fame was carried through the earth, and a King of England, a heathen of over-seas, hearing, was taken with the love of her. And he set all his heart on having her for wife to his son Æther, and for daughter in his home. So he sent a mighty and honourable embassy, of earls and marquesses, with goodly company of knights, and ladies, and philosophers; bidding them, with all courtesy and discretion, pray King Maurus to give Ursula in marriage to Æther. "But," he said, "if Maurus will not hear your gentle words, open to him all my heart, and tell him that I will ravage his land with fire, and slay his people, and make himself die a cruel death, and will, after, lead Ursula away with me. Give him but three days to answer, for I am wasted with desire to finish the matter, and hold Ursula in my ward."

But when the ambassadors came to King Maurus, he would not have his daughter wed a heathen; so, since prayers and gifts did not move him, they spoke out all the threats. Now the land of Britain was little, and its soldiers few, while the heathen was a mighty King and a conqueror; so Maurus, and his Queen, and his councillors, and all the people, were in sore distress.

But on the evening of the second day, Ursula went

into her chamber, and shut close the doors ; and before the image of the Father, who is very pitiful, prayed all night with tears, telling how she had vowed in her heart to live a holy maiden all her days, having Christ alone for spouse. But, if His will were that she should wed the son of the heathen King, she prayed that wisdom might be given her, to turn the hearts of all that people who knew not faith nor holiness ; and power to comfort her father and mother, and all the people of her fatherland.

And when the clear light of dawn was in the air, she fell asleep. And the Angel of the Lord appeared to her in a dream, saying, "Ursula, your prayer is heard. At the sunrising you shall go boldly before the ambassadors of the King of Over-sea, for the God of Heaven shall give you wisdom, and teach your tongue what it should speak." When it was day, Ursula rose to bless and glorify the name of God. She put on for covering and for beauty an enwrought mantle like the starry sky, and was crowned with a coronet of gems. Then, straightway passing to her father's chamber, she told him what grace had been done to her that night, and all that now was in her heart to answer to the ambassadors of Over-sea. So, though long he would not, she persuaded her father.

Then Maurus, and his lords and councillors, and the ambassadors of the heathen King, were gathered in the Hall of Council. And when Ursula entered the place where these lords were, one said to the other, "Who is this that comes from Paradise?" For she moved in all noble gentleness, with eyes inclined to earth, learned, and frank, and fair, delightful above all women upon earth. Behind her came a hundred maidens, clothed in white silk, fair and lovely. They

shone brightly as the stars, but Ursula shone as the moon and the evening star.

Now this was the answer Ursula made, which the King caused to be written, and sealed with the royal seal, and gave to the ambassadors of the King of Over-sea.

"I will take," she said, "for spouse, Æther, the son of my lord the King of Over-sea." But I ask of my lord three graces, and with heart and soul pray of him to grant them.

"The first grace I ask is this, that he, and the Queen, and their son, my spouse, be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

"The second grace is that three years may be given me, before the bridal, in which to go to and fro upon the sea, that I may visit the bodies of the Saints in Rome, and the blessed places of the Holy Land

"And for the last grace, I ask that he choose ten fair maidens of his kingdom, and with each of these a thousand more, all of gentle blood, who shall come to me here, in Britain, and go with me in gladness upon the sea, following this my holy pilgrimage."

Then spake one of the nobles of the land to Maurus, saying, "My lord the King, this your daughter is the Dove of Peace come from Paradise, the same that in the days of the Flood brought to the Ark of Noah the olive-branch of good news." And at the answer, were the ambassadors so full of joy that they well-nigh could not speak, and with praise and triumph they went their way, and told their master all the sweet answer of Ursula.

Then my lord the King said, "Praised and blessed be the name of our God Malcometto, who has given my soul for comfort that which it desired. Truly there is not a franker lady under the wheel of the sun ; and by

the body of my mother I swear there is nothing she can ask that I will not freely give. First of the maidens she desires shall be my daughter Florence." Then all his lords rose, man by man, and gladly named, each, his child.

So the will of Ursula was done ; and that King, and all his folk, were baptized into the Holy Faith. And Æther, with the English maidens, in number above ten thousand, came to the land of Britain.

Then Ursula chose her own four sisters, Habila, and Julia, and Victoria, and Aurea, and a thousand daughters of her people, with certain holy bishops, and great lords, and grave councillors, and an abbot of the order of St. Benedict, men full of all wisdom, and friends of God.

So all that company set sail in eleven ships, and passing this way and that upon the sea, rejoiced in it, and in this their maiden pilgrimage. And those who dwelt by the shores of the sea came forth in multitudes to gaze upon them as they passed, and to each man it appeared a delightful vision. For the ships sailed in fair order, side by side, with sound of sweet psalms and murmur of the waters. And the maidens were clad, some in scarlet and some in pure samite, some in rich silk of Damascus, some in cloth of gold, and some in the purple robe that is woven in Judca. Some wore crowns, others garlands of flowers. Upon the shoulder of each was the visible cross, in the hands of each a pilgrim's staff, by their sides were pilgrims' scrips, and each ship's company sailed under the gonfalon of the Holy Cross. Ursula in the midst was like a ray of sunlight, and the Angel of the Lord was ever with them for guide.

So in the holy time of Lent they came to Rome. And when my Lord the Pope came forth, under the

Castle of St. Angelo, with great state, to greet them, seeing their blessed assembly, he put off the mantle of Peter, and with many bishops, priests, and brothers, and certain cardinals, set himself to go with them on their blessed pilgrimage.

At length they came to the land of Slavonia, whose ruler was friend and liegeman to the Soldan of Babylon. Then the Lord of the Saracens sent straightway to the Soldan, telling what a mighty company had come to his land, and how they were Christian folk. And the Soldan gathered all his men of war, and with great rage the host of the heathen made against the company of Ursula.

And when they were nigh, the Soldan cried and said, "What folk are ye?" And Ursula spake in answer, "We are Christian folk: our feet are turned to the blessed tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the saving of our souls, and that we may win grace to pass into eternal life, in the blessed Paradise." And the Soldan answered, "Either deny your God, or I will slay you all with the sword. So shall ye die a dolorous death, and see your land no more." And Ursula answered, "Even so we desire to be sure witnesses for the name of God, declaring and preaching the glory of His name; because He has made heaven and earth and the sea by His Word; and afterward all living things; and afterward has willed, Himself, to die, for our salvation and glory. And who follows Him shall go to rejoice in *His* Fatherland and in His Kingdom."

Then she turned to her people: "My sisters and my brothers, in this place God has given us great grace. Embrace and make it sure, for our death in this place will be life perpetual, and joy, and sweetness never-ending. And there, above, we shall be with the Majesty

and the angels of Paradise." Then she called her spouse to comfort and teach him. And he answered her with these words, "To me it appears three thousand years that death is a-coming, so much have I already tasted of the sweetness of Paradise."

Then the Soldan gave commandment that they should all be slain with the sword. And so was it done.

Yet when he saw Ursula standing, in the midst of all that slaughter, like the fairest stalk of corn in harvest, and how she was exceeding lovely, beyond the tongues of this earth to tell, he would have saved her alive, and taken her for wife. But when she would not, and rebuked him, he was moved with anger. Now there was a bow in his hand, and he set an arrow on the string, and drew it with all his strength, and it pierced the heart of the glorious maiden. So she went to God.

And one maiden only, whose name was Corbula, through fear hid herself in the ship. But God, who had chosen all that company, gave her heart, and with the dawn of the next day she came forth willingly, and received the martyr's crown.

Thus all were slain, and all are gone to Paradise, and sing the glad and sweet songs of Paradise.

Whosoever reads this holy history, let him not think it a great thing to say an Our Father, and a Hail Mary, for the soul of him who has written it.

Thus far the old myth. You shall hear now in what manner such a myth is re-written by a great man, born in the days of a nation's strength.

Carpaccio begins his story with what the myth calls a dream. But he wishes to tell you that it

was no dream,—but a vision;—that a real angel came, and was seen by Ursula's soul, when her mortal eyes were closed.

“The Angel of the Lord,” says the legend. What!—thinks Carpaccio;—to this little maid of fifteen, the angel that came to Moses and Joshua? Not so, but her own guardian angel.

Guardian, and to tell her that God will guide her heart to-morrow, and put His own answer on her lips, concerning her marriage. Shall not such angel be crowned with light, and strew her chamber with lilies?

There is no glory round his head; there is no gold on his robes; they are of subdued purple and gray. His wings are colourless—his face calm, but sorrowful,—wholly in shade. In his right hand he bears the martyr's palm; in his left, the fillet borne by the Greek angels of victory, and, together with it, gathers up, knotted in his hand, the folds of shroud * with which the Etrurians veil the tomb.

* I could not see this symbol at the height at which the picture hung from the ground, when I described it in 1872. The folds of the drapery in the *hand* are all but invisible, even when the picture is seen close; and so neutral in their gray-green colour that they pass imperceptibly into violet, as the faint green of evening sky fades into its purple. But the folds are continued under the wrist in the alternate waves which the reader may see on the Etruscan tomb in the first room of the British Museum, with a sculpturesque severity which I could not then understand, and could only account for by supposing that Carpaccio had meant the Princess to “dream out the angel's dress so particularly”! I mistook the fillet of victory also for a scroll; and could not make out the flowers in the

He comes to her, "in the clear light of morning;" the Angel of Death.

You see it is written in the legend that she had shut close the doors of her chamber.

They have opened as the angel enters,—not one only, but all in the room,—all in the house. He enters by one at the foot of her bed; but beyond it is another—open into the passage; out of that another into some luminous hall or street. All the window-shutters are wide open; they are made dark that you may notice them,—nay, all the press doors are open! No treasure bars shall hold, where *this* angel enters.

Carpaccio has been intent to mark that he comes in the light of dawn. The blue-green sky glows between the dark leaves of the olive and dianthus in the open window. But its light is low compared to that which enters *behind* the angel, falling full on Ursula's face, in divine rest.

window. They are pinks, the favourite ones in Italian windows to this day, and having a particular relation to St. Ursula in the way they rend their calyx; and I believe also in their peculiar relation to the grasses, (of which more in 'Proserpina') St. Ursula is not meant, herself, to recognize the angel. He enters under the door over which she has put her little statue of Venus; and through that door the room is filled with light, so that it will not seem to her strange that his own form, as he enters, should be in shade; and she cannot see his dark wings. On the tassel of her pillow, (Etrurian also,) is written "Infantia"; and above her head, the carving of the bed ends in a spiral flame, typical of the finally ascending Spirit. She lies on her bier, in the last picture but one, exactly as here on her bed; only the coverlid is there changed from scarlet to pale violet. See notes on the meaning of these colours in third 'Deucalion.'

In the last picture but one, of this story, he has painted her lying in the rest which the angel came to bring: and in the last, is her rising in the eternal Morning.

For this is the first lesson which Carpaccio wrote in his Venetian words for the creatures of this restless world,—that Death is better than *their* life; and that not bridegroom rejoices over bride as they rejoice who marry not, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God, in Heaven.

LETTER LXXII

THE FATHERLAND

VENICE, 9th November, 1876, 7 morning

I HAVE set my writing-table close to the pillars of the great window of the Ca' Ferro, which I drew, in 1841, carefully, with those of the next palace, Ca' Contarini Fasan. Samuel Prout was so pleased with the sketch that he borrowed it, and made the upright drawing from it of the palace with the rich balconies, which now represents his work very widely as a chromolitho-tint.*

Between the shafts of the pillars, the morning sky is seen pure and pale, relieving the grey dome of the church of the Salute; but beside that vault, and like it, vast thunderclouds heap themselves above the horizon, catching the light of dawn upon them where they rise, far westward, over the dark roof of the ruined Badia;—but all so massive, that, half an hour ago, in the dawn, I scarcely knew the Salute dome and towers from theirs; while the seagulls, rising and falling hither and thither in clusters above the green water beyond my balcony, tell me that the south wind is wild on Adria.

My original sketch is now in the Schools of Oxford.

"*Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ.*"—The Sea has her Lord, and the sea-birds are prescient of the storm; but my own England, ruler of the waves in her own proud thoughts, can she rule the tumult of her people or, pilotless, even so much as discern the thunderclouds heaped over her Galilean lake of life?

Here is a little grey cockle-shell, lying beside me, which I gathered, the other evening, out of the dust of the Island of St. Helena; and a brightly-spotted snail-shell, from the thistly sands of Lido; and I want to set myself to draw these, and describe them, in peace.

'Yes,' all my friends say, 'that is my business; why can't I mind it, and be happy?'

Well, good friends, I would fain please you, and myself with you; and live here in my Venetian palace, luxurious; scrutinant of dome, cloud, and cockle-shell. I could even sell my books for not inconsiderable sums of money if I chose to bribe the reviewers, pay half of all I got to the booksellers, stick bills on the lamp-posts, and say nothing but what would please the Bishop of Peterborough.

I could say a great deal that would please him, and yet be very good and useful; I should like much again to be on terms with my old publisher, and hear him telling me nice stories over our walnuts, this Christmas, after dividing his year's spoil with me in Christmas charity. And little enough mind have I for any work, in this seventy-seventh year that's coming of our glorious century,

wider than I could find in the compass of my cockle-shell.

But alas! my prudent friends, little enough of all that I have a mind to may be permitted me. For this green tide that eddies by my threshold is full of floating corpses, and I must leave my dinner to bury them, since I cannot save; and put my cockle-shell in cap, and take my staff in hand, to seek an unencumbered shore. This green sea-tide!—yes, and if you knew it, your black and sulphurous tides also—Yarrow, and Teviot, and Clyde, and the stream, for ever now drumly and dark as it rolls on its way, at the ford of Melrose.

Yes, and the fair lakes and running waters in your English park pleasure-grounds,—nay, also the great and wide sea, that gnaws your cliffs,—yes, and Death, and Hell also, more cruel than cliff or sea; and a more neutral episcopal person than even my Lord of Peterborough* stands, level-barred balance in hand,—waiting (how long?) till the Sea shall give up the dead which are in it, and Death, and Hell, give up the dead which are in them.

Have you ever thought of, or desired to know, the real meaning of that sign, seen with the human eyes

* I have lost the reference to a number of the *Monetary Gazette*, of three or four weeks back, containing an excellent article on the Bishop of Peterborough's declaration, referred to in the text, that the disputes between masters and men respecting wages were a question of Political Economy, in which the clergy must remain 'strictly neutral.'

of his soul by the disciple whom the Lord loved? Yes, of course you have! and what a grand and noble verse you always thought it! "And the Sea——" Softly, good friend,—I know you can say it off glibly and pompously enough, as you have heard it read a thousand times; but is it, then, merely a piece of pomp? mere drumming and trumpeting, to tell you—what might have been said in three words—that all the dead rose again, whether they had been bedridden, or drowned, or slain? If it means no more than that, is it not, to speak frankly, bombast, and even bad and half unintelligible bombast?—for what does 'Death' mean, as distinguished from the Sea,—the American lakes? or Hell as distinguished from Death,—a family vault instead of a grave?

But suppose it is not bombast, and does mean something that it would be well you should think of,—have you yet understood it,—much less, thought of it? Read the whole passage from the beginning: "I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before God. And the Books were opened;"—and so to the end.

'*Stand*' in renewed perfectness of body and soul—each redeemed from its own manner of Death.

For have not they each their own manner? As the seed by the drought, or the thorn,—so the soul by the soul's hunger, and the soul's pang;—athirst in the springless sand; choked in the return wave of Edom; grasped by the chasm of the earth: some,

yet calling "out of the depths;" but some—"Thou didst blow with Thy wind and the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters." But *now* the natural grave, in which the gentle saints resigned their perfect body to the dust, and perfect spirit to Him who gave it;—and now the wide sea of the world, that drifted with its weeds so many breasts that heaved but with the heaving deep;—and now the Death that overtook the lingering step, and closed the lustful eyes;—and now the Hell, that hid with its shade, and scourged with its agony, the fierce and foul spirits that had forced its gates in flesh: *—all these the Loved Apostle saw compelled to restore their ruin; and all these, their prey, stand once again, renewed, as their Maker made them, before their Maker. "And the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it, and Death, and Hell, the dead which were in them."

Not bombast, good reader, in any wise, nor a merely soothing melody of charming English, to be mouthed for a 'second lesson.'

But is it worse than bombast, then? Is it, perchance, pure Lie?

Carpaccio, at all events, thought not; and this, as I have told you, is the first practical opinion of his I want you to be well informed of.

Since that last Fors was written, one of my friends found for me the most beautiful of all

* *Conf. 'Inferno,'* XXXIII. 123.

the symbols in the picture of the Dream ;—one of those which leap to the eyes when they are understood, yet which, in the sweet enigma, I had deliberately twice painted, without understanding.

At the head of the princess's bed is embroidered her shield ; (of which elsewhere)—but on a dark blue-green space in the cornice above it is another very little and bright shield, it seemed,—but with no bearing. I painted it, thinking it was meant merely for a minute repetition of the escutcheon below, and that the painter had not taken the trouble to blazon the bearings again. (I might have known Carpaccio never would even *omit* without meaning.) And I never noticed that it was not in a line above the escutcheon, but exactly above the princess's head. It gleams with bright silver edges out of the dark-blue ground—the point of the mortal Arrow !

At the time it was painted the sign would necessarily have been recognised in a moment ; and it completes the meaning of the vision without any chance of mistake.

And it seems to me, guided by such arrow-point, the purpose of Fors that I should make clear the meaning of what I have myself said on this matter, throughout the six years in which I have been permitted to carry on the writing of these letters, and to preface their series for the seventh year, with the interpretation of this Myth of Venice.

I have told you that all Carpaccio's sayings are

of knowledge, not of opinion. And I mean by knowledge, *communicable* knowledge. Not merely personal, however certain—like Job's 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' but discovered truth, which can be shown to all men who are willing to receive it. No great truth is allowed by nature to be demonstrable to any person who, foreseeing its consequences, desires to refuse it. He has put himself into the power of the Great Deceiver; and will in every effort be only further deceived, and place more fastened faith in his error.

This, then, is the truth which Carpaccio knows, and would teach:—

That the world is divided into two groups of men; the first, those whose God is their God, and whose glory is their glory, who mind heavenly things; and the second, men whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame,* who mind earthly things. That is just as demonstrable a scientific fact as the separation of land from water. There may be any quantity of intermediate mind, in various conditions of bog;—some, wholesome Scotch peat,—some, Pontine marsh,—some, sulphurous slime, like what people call water in English manufacturing towns; but the elements of Croyance and Mescroyance are always chemically separable out of the putrescent mess: by the faith that is in it, what life or good it can still keep,

* Mr. Darwin's last discoveries of the gestures of honour and courtesy among baboons are a singular completion of the types of this truth in the natural world.

or do, is possible; by the miscreance in it, what mischief it can do, or annihilation it can suffer, is appointed for its work and fate. All strong character curdles itself out of the scum into its own place and power, or impotence: and they that sow to the Flesh do of the Flesh reap corruption; and they that sow to the Spirit, do of the Spirit reap Life.

I pause, without writing 'everlasting,' as perhaps you expected. Neither Carpaccio nor I know anything about Duration of life, or what the word translated 'everlasting,' means. Nay, the first sign of noble trust in God and man, is to be able to act without any such hope. All the heroic deeds, all the purely unselfish passions of our existence, depend on our being able to live, if need be, through the Shadow of Death: and the daily heroïsm of simply brave men consists in fronting and accepting Death as such, trusting that what their Maker decrees for them shall be well.

But what Carpaccio knows, and what I know also, are precisely the things which your wiseacre apothecaries, and their apprentices, and too often your wiseacre rectors and vicars, and *their* apprentices, tell you that you can't know, because "eye hath not seen nor ear heard them," the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God has revealed them to *us*,—to Carpaccio, and Angelico, and Dante, and Giotto, and Filippo Lippi, and Sandro Botticelli, and me,

and to every child that has been taught to know its Father in heaven,—by the Spirit; because we have minded, or do mind, the things of the Spirit in some measure, and in such measure have entered into our rest.

“The things which God *hath prepared* for them that love Him.” Hereafter, and up there, above the clouds, you have been taught to think; until you were informed by your land-surveyors that there was neither up nor down; but only an axis of x and an axis of y ; and by aspiring aeronauts that there was nothing in the blue but damp and azote. And now you don't believe these things are prepared *anywhere*? They are prepared just as much as ever, when and where they used to be: just now, and here, close at your hand. All things are prepared,—come ye to the marriage. Up and down on the old highways which your fathers trod, and under the hedges of virgin's bower and wild rose which your fathers planted, there are the messengers crying to you to come. Nay, at your very doors, though one is just like the other in your model lodging houses,—there is One knocking, if you would open, with something better than tracts in His basket;—supper, and very material supper, if you will only condescend to eat of angels' food first. There are meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: doth not your Father know that ye have need of these things? But if you make your belly your only love, and your meats your only masters, God shall destroy both it and them.

Truly, it is hard for you to hear the low knocking in the hubbub of your Vanity Fair. You are living in the midst of the most perfectly miscreant crowd that ever blasphemed creation. Not with the old snap-finger blasphemy of the wantonly profane, but the deliberate blasphemy of Adam Smith: 'Thou shalt hate the Lord thy God, damn His laws, and covet thy neighbour's goods.' Here's one of my own boys getting up that lesson beside me for his next Oxford examination. For Adam Smith is accepted as the outcome of Practical Philosophy, at our universities; and their youth urged to come out high in competitive blasphemy. Not the old snap-finger sort,* I repeat, but that momentary sentiment, deliberately adopted for a national law. I must turn aside for a minute or two to explain this to you.

The eighth circle of Dante's Hell (compare Fors, vol. i. p. 492) is the circle of fraud, divided into ten gulphs; in the seventh of these gulphs are the Thieves, by Fraud,—brilliantly now represented by the men who covet their neighbours' goods and take them in any way they think safe, by high finance, sham companies, cheap goods, or any other of our popular modern ways.

Now there is not in all the Inferno quite so

* In old English illuminated Psalters, of which I hope soon to send a perfect example to Sheffield to companion our Bible, the vignette of the Fool saying in his heart, 'There is no God,' nearly always represents him in this action. Vanni Fucci makes the Italian sign of the Fig,—'A fig for you!'

studied a piece of descriptive work as Dante's relation of the infection of one cursed soul of this crew by another. They change alternately into the forms of men and serpents, each biting the other into this change—

“ Ivy ne'er clasped
A doddered oak, as round the other's limbs
The hideous monster intertwined his own ;
Then, as they both had been of burning wax,
Each melted into other.”

Read the story of the three transformations for yourself (Cantos xxiv., xxv.), and then note the main point of all, that the spirit of such theft is especially indicated by its intense and direct manner of blasphemy :—

“ I did not mark,
Through all the gloomy circle of the abyss,
Spirit that swelled so proudly 'gainst its God,
Not him who headlong fell from Thebes ”

The soul is Vanni Fucci's, who rifled the sacristy of St. James of Pistoja, and charged Vanni della Nona with the sacrilege, whereupon the latter suffered death. For in those days, death was still the reward of sacrilege by the Law of State ; whereas, while I write this Fors, I receive notice of the conjunction of the sacred and profane civic powers of London to de-consecrate, and restore to the definitely pronounced 'unholy' spaces of this world, the church of All-Hallows, wherein Milton was christened

A Bishop was there to read, as it were, the

Lord's Prayer backwards, or at least address it to the Devil instead of to God, to pray that over this portion of British Metropolitan territory *His* Kingdom might again come.

A notable sign of the times,—completed, in the mythical detail of it, by the defiance of the sacred name of the Church, and the desecration of good men's graves,* lest, perchance, the St. Ursulas of other lands should ever come on pilgrimage, rejoicing, over the sea, hopeful to see such holy graves among the sights of London.

Infinitely ridiculous, such travelling as St. Ursula's, you think,—to see dead bodies, forsooth, and ask, with every poor, bewildered Campagna peasant, "Dov' è San Paolo?" Not at all such the object of modern English and American Tourists!—nay, sagacious Mr. Spurgeon came home from his foreign tour, and who more proud than he to have scorned, in a rational manner, all relics and old bones? I have some notes by me, ready for February, concerning the unrejoicing manner of travel adopted by the sagacious modern tourist, and his objects of contemplation, for due comparison with St. Ursula's; but must to-day bring her lesson close home to your own thoughts.

Look back to the Fors of January for this year

* My friend Mr W C. Sillar rose in the church, and protested, in the name of God, against the proceedings. He was taken into custody as disorderly,—the press charitably suggested, only drunk;—and was I believe, discharged without fine or imprisonment, for we live in liberal days.

(pp. 233, 234, and 250 *ante*). The first tells you, what this last sign of Church desecration now confirms, that you are in the midst of men who, *if* there be truth in Christianity at all, must be punished for their open defiance of Heaven by the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, and the triumph of the Evil One. And you are told in the last page that by the service of God only you can recover the presence of the Holy Ghost of Life and Health—the Comforter.

This—vaguely and imperfectly, during the last six years, proclaimed to you, as it was granted me—in this coming seventh year I trust to make more simply manifest ; and to show you how every earthly good and possession will be given you, if you seek first the Kingdom of God and His Justice. If, in the assurance of Faith, you can ask and strive that such kingdom may be with you, though it is not meat and drink, but Justice, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost,—if, in the first terms I put to you for oath,* you will do good work, whether you live or die, and so lie down at night, whether hungry or weary, at least in peace of heart and surety of honour ;—then, you shall rejoice, in your native land, and on your nursing sea, in all fulness of temporal possession ;—then, for you the earth shall bring forth her increase, and for you the floods clap their hands ;—throughout your sacred pilgrimage, strangers here

* Compare Fors of October, 1874, vol. ii. p. 447 to end, observing especially the sentence out of 2nd Esdras, “before *they* were sealed that have gathered Faith for a Treasure.”

and sojourners with God, yet His word shall be with you,—“the land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is Mine,” and after your numbered days of happy loyalty, you shall go to rejoice in His Fatherland, and with His people.

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(Because as on its circular parapets

Montereggione crowns itself with towers,

E'en thus the margin which surrounds the well

With one half of their bodies turreted

The horrible giants, whom Jove menaces,

E'en now from out the heavens when he thunders.)

„ Inf. xxxi. 76. Nimrod, 374.

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(So, in like manner, did those carols, dancing

In different measure, of their affluence

Give me the gauge, as they were swift or slow)

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* The passage in French on p 215 is from 'Gil Blas,' book 1 chap 5. "The lieutenant (of the robbers) addressed the captain, and told him that he had just carried off these hampers, full of sugar, cinnamon, almonds, and raisins, from a grocer at Benavente After he had given account of his expedition to the shop, the spoils of the grocer were carried into the pantry. Then there was nothing to do but to enjoy oneself. I made my first appearance (as butler) at the sideboard, which I decked with several bottles of that good wine which Señor Rolando had boasted to me."

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